

CJR

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REVIEW

JULY/AUGUST 1991 • \$3

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OF THE KURDS,
THE POWER
OF TV

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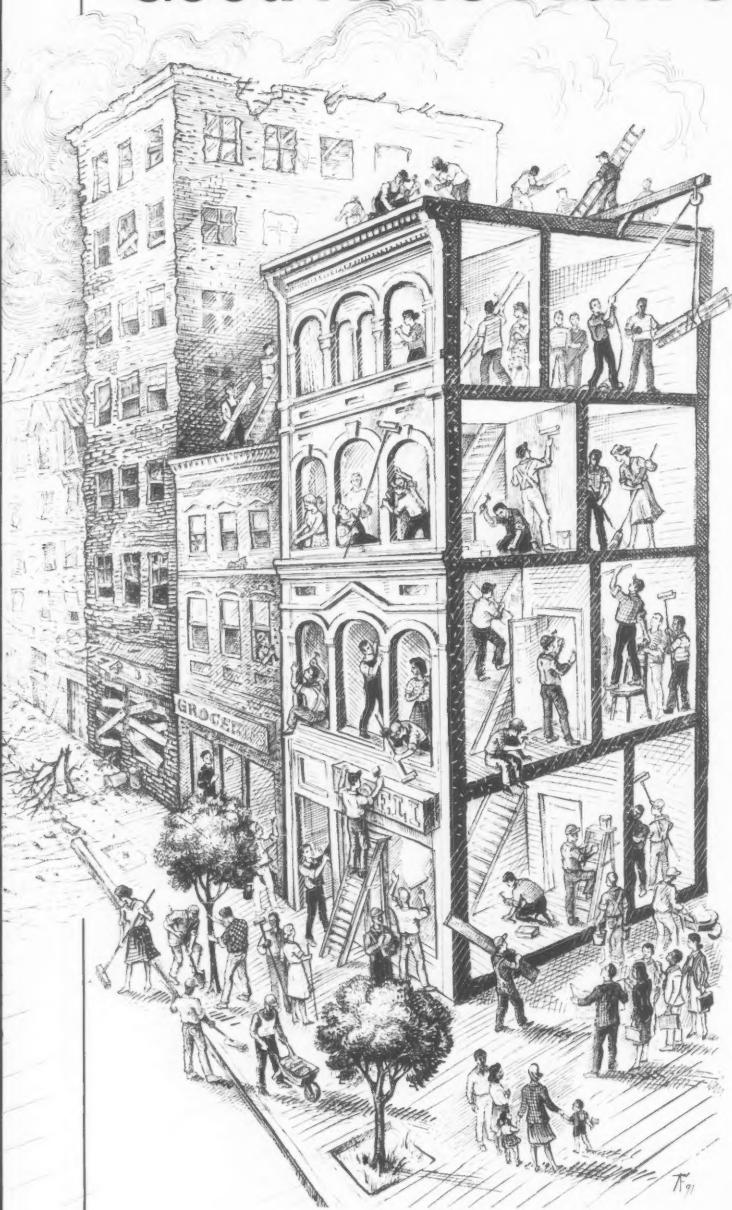
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JULY/AUGUST 1991

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AND DECENT"

From the founding editorial,
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Kurdish refugees on the Turkish border await their fate.

• • • • • AFTER THE WAR • • • • •

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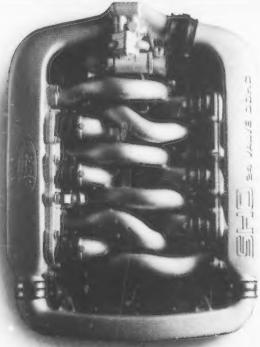
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LETTERS

CHEERS AND ... AHEM

◆ The May/June issue of CJR was one of the best ever for this reader. I didn't think I could learn anything new about the Iraq war and the media anymore, for example, but I did.

One small slip-up: in "The Upside to a Downturn," Daniel Lazare describes Vance Packard and William H. White as sociologists. Neither was trained in sociology. Holly White was a *Fortune* writer when he complained about homogeneity and conformity, while Packard had or has a J-school degree (yes, from Columbia). Indeed, the homogeneity/conformity complaint was a journalistic specialty of the 1950s and a few sociologists got themselves better known by showing it was not accurate, the undersigned included.

HERBERT GANS
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

HALBERSTAM ON GOODMAN ON ARNETT

◆ I was greatly surprised by Walter Goodman's tone in what seems to me an exceptionally condescending article about Peter Arnett's reporting from Baghdad ("Arnett," CJR, May/June). In it he refers to me as one of the people who spoke primarily about Arnett's credentials; Goodman's exact phrase, "credential mongering," seems unusually snide. It is true that early in the war, when Peter's role as the only reporter in Baghdad first surfaced (and when interviewers seemed exclusively interested in who he was and where he had come from), I spoke with immense admiration of his credentials and said I thought he was the great

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reporter of the Vietnam War. It was for me, however, more than just a matter of credentials; what I tried to talk about was my feeling that Peter had an almost unique ability to operate in an environment that most reporters would have found unendurable both physically and psychologically.

As the Arnett story played out and became more complicated, I became one of several reporters from the Vietnam era who, both on television and in print, defended Peter repeatedly in what became an increasingly ugly climate. We did this in a mood of mounting jingoism in the country and as Peter became the principal target of that jingoism. One of the points I tried to raise was the question of why, in a war in which almost all reporting was for a variety of reasons so heavily controlled, so much fuss was being made about Arnett's reporting. We are, after all, talking about reporting that clearly was not helping Saddam Hussein in any sense in propaganda terms, but that might at best have some ancillary effect on how much damage Americans were willing to do to a city like Baghdad. I said in several interviews that I suspected that the administration helped orchestrate the attacks on Arnett for political reasons. Since what Peter was doing clearly offended a majority of Americans, there was considerable subliminal benefit, lending support to the administration's rationale for limiting access to reporters elsewhere in the gulf: Arnett became the treasonous voice of Baghdad, and all reporters therefore were Arnetts, and therefore were to be perceived as being on the other side and were to be controlled.

Some of us who defended Arnett, like Neil Sheehan and George Esper, did so, I suspect, because when we were younger and had not yet established our reputations, we were assaulted by similar charges from the then-administration, the military, the right wing, and their assorted journalistic sycophants — and our own editors did not bestir themselves greatly to defend us. We were therefore made involuntarily aware that powerful people in institutional journalism, for a variety of reasons (some worthy, some less so), do not come to the defense of their reporters in the field. I think a number of us felt that this should not happen again.

Peter's supporters thought he was doing very well under extremely difficult condi-

tions. I — and I was hardly alone in this — also noted that his was one small window, a limited one at that, and although Arnett could not move it around, it remained a valuable window nonetheless. The reporting, I added, was carefully labeled. I also pointed out that because of Arnett's considerable skills as a journalist, he was able, despite the heavy censorship imposed on him, to pass on important information. (In his interview with Saddam Hussein he was able to show, by means of asking Saddam a question, that in just a few days the American bombing had already taken a far heavier toll on Baghdad than eight years of fighting the Iranians had. In addition, one memorable film clip of the revolutionary council meeting, with the members wearing their heavy coats while indoors, seemed to me to be extremely valuable in terms of information passed on and far more persuasive than any number of print items, showing that this was a country whose military was in great trouble.) I suggested that Americans who were bothered by the idea of an American television journalist filing from an enemy capital should imagine what it might have been like to have a television correspondent, albeit heavily censored, in Berlin or Tokyo during the final months of World War II, for example; and I suggested that we might all have been well served by it.

I said on a number of occasions that I thought that what Arnett was doing was only part of the truth but an important part, that because of CNN's unique position he was the first war correspondent of the global village, and that the entire struggle between government and media in this war, unlike that in Vietnam, seemed to be not about words, but about pictures and control of the cameras. I made many of these comments on a Fred Friendly public television special, which apparently Mr. Goodman missed. Near the end of that program I asked James Schlesinger whether, if he were still the head of the CIA, he would have wanted Arnett and CNN to keep broadcasting. In what seems perhaps the most important answer in the entire debate, he answered in the affirmative.

DAVID HALBERSTAM
NEW YORK, N.Y.

LINGERING QUESTIONS

◆ It is a bit distressing to see the rather one-sided debate now raging in professional circles about how the military — especially the Army — conspired to muzzle press coverage during the gulf war.

There was no monolithic conspiracy to limit access of U.S. journalists to front-line units. There was, rather, an uneven effort by Army public affairs officers to accommo-

date as many journalists as possible while trying to convince skeptical senior staff officers of the wisdom of supporting this effort. Strange as it may sound to our critics, our mission was to try to facilitate news coverage without compromising operational security or disrupting combat preparations.

The arrogance and ignorance of many American journalists compounded the difficulty of our mission. This is not to tar all with the same brush — as critics now tar all Army public affairs representatives. There were some journalists out there who understood the military — its organization, its

requirements, and its limitations. But the number of those who did not understand was sufficient to engender the distrust of many in the military.

Too many journalists in their zeal to pursue the exclusive scoop forgot perspective and the impact of what they reported. And sometimes what they reported was, if not wrong, at least not the full truth. The classic example of this was the furor over the transmission defect of the A2-model of the Bradley Fighting Vehicle — a defect supposedly shared by all of the more than 500 used in the theater. In fact, only two BFVs

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BUSINESS

were found to have the defect and both were repaired during the hour it took to inspect them. Yet the impression left was that thousands of soldiers were at risk because of the defect, that the entire fleet was incapable of accomplishing its mission.

If the ignorance of many American journalists wasn't enough to turn off Army public affairs representatives, their arrogance was. It astounds me that in his May/June piece titled "The Unilaterals," Chris Hedges should boast of his subterfuges to avoid detection and move freely about among American forces in pursuit of his own personal glory — to get his story. By donning an American military uniform and equipment and marking his car as a military vehicle in order to gather information on military activities, he came dangerously close to the classic definition of a spy. (I also noted an inaccuracy in his account. There is no Sixth Marine Division. It has not existed since World War II.)

I know from personal experience of a journalist who frantically urged me to circumvent a checkpoint because traffic was backed up at it. He said the delay might cause him to miss his free military helicopter ride. We waited because I knew of at least two machine guns backing the checkpoint that would have fired at us had we

tried to crash it.

I know of another incident in which four American journalists came within a heartbeat of having their car and themselves "lit up" by a marine machine-gunner. They had apparently broken away from the Egyptian unit they had been traveling with and had traveled far ahead of them.

Had it not been for the gut feeling of a marine reserve captain who told his gunner to hold fire after firing two warning bursts, the journalists and their car would have been ripped apart by friendly fire from the heavy machine gun's bullets. I wonder what the headlines would have made of that: MARINE GUNNER BUTCHERS U.S. JOURNALISTS.

To support half a million troops in an area the size of the southeastern United States is a monumental logistics task that requires a lot of coordination, which the Army was not able to pull off perfectly. Add the equivalent of another battalion or two of individuals running free in the battle zone and more than a few are going to drop through the cracks, with the resulting howls of neglect.

It is a distraction tactical commanders don't need. Many commanders believe that if you don't contribute to the immediate combat power of the unit, then you are superfluous. (This includes us PAO pukes.) This is not a good long-range attitude, but in

combat situations little thought is given to the long-range aspects. There are more pressing matters, like what will help the commander and his or her troops survive the next few hours.

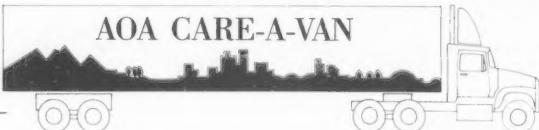
Granted, many units welcomed media visits. They provided a touch of home. But when the bullets began to fly, I found such visits were not as welcome. The journalist is not trained to react as part of the team and his ignorance could cost some of the team members their lives.

That the pool system did not work as well as hoped was as big a disappointment to the Army public affairs officers I knew as it was to the journalists (despite what they might think). Our story was not getting out.

Unfortunately, we suspected it would not work. Some of us knew the obstacles that would lie in our path. However, our entreaties made little impression on those who could help us move the stories, film, and videotape to the rear. There were other priorities — military priorities.

That Seventh Corps was a "black hole," as William Boot quotes another reporter as saying in "The Pool," even many Army public affairs representatives will admit. Trying to winnow even the simplest of information from the corps was difficult. I know I spent many frustrating days trying to get informa-

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tion or confirmation of reports out of Seventh Corps. I can sympathize with Boot in his frustration over his inability to file his stories. However, I also know the efforts members of my unit made to try to transport media products as part of the "Public Affairs Express."

Unfortunately, we were forced to make compromises because, with limited ground transportation, the "Express" failed to deliver. Yet it would have been unrealistic to insist that the military should tie up precious lines of communication to transmit stories. In retrospect, it probably would have been better if the Army had permitted pools to establish satellite up-links at their own expense at the corps' headquarters.

Looking back on the gulf war, it seems clear to me that the relations between the media and the Army did little to restore the trust that existed in World War II.

RICHARD H. BROWNE
FAYETTEVILLE, N.C.

Editors' note: Richard H. Browne is a reporter with the Fayetteville, North Carolina, Observer-Times. His Army National Guard unit (the 382nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment) was mobilized in August 1990 and spent six and a half months in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. His unit was

assigned to the Joint Information Bureau in Dhahran for two months and, subsequently, to Headquarters, U.S. Army Forces Central Command. Now demobilized, he writes as an individual and not as a spokesman for the U.S. Army or the Army National Guard.

FAIR REPLAY

◆ I didn't write a letter to the editor of CJR in response to Jeff Cohen's letter attacking me in the March/April issue because (1) I am confident that my series, like my overall record, speaks for itself, (2) I don't think a reporter should generally have both the first and last word, and (3) I didn't want to be guilty of the same kind of hypersensitivity to criticism that I've often noticed in other journalists. But I see that Bill Dedman has repeated Cohen's criticisms of me in "Picking the Pulitzer" (CJR, May/June). Dedman rightly concedes that he has "no idea if they are valid or substantial or merely ideological," but he manages — inadvertently, I suspect — to misrepresent and magnify them; he says that Cohen had challenged "the methodology and accuracy of articles by David Shaw ... particularly his series alleging a pro-choice bias in abortion coverage in the press." This implies that Cohen has criticized the methodology and accuracy of some of my other stories as well. He has

not done so — at least to my knowledge and certainly not in his letter to CJR.

In twenty-eight years as a reporter, I have often seen charges as demonstrably spurious as these come to be accepted as truth if they are not challenged, so please allow me to set the record straight.

My series on media coverage of abortion was based on four months of exhaustive, evenhanded research that included an examination of major newspaper, television, and newsmagazine coverage over the preceding eighteen months, as well as more than 100 interviews with journalists and with activists on both sides of the abortion debate. Many of these journalists (and even some activists) who personally and vigorously favor a woman's right to have an abortion readily conceded what the published and broadcast record clearly showed — that media coverage, however unintentionally, has often been biased against opponents of abortion "either in content, tone, choice of language, or prominence of play." Several high-ranking editors who personally favor abortion rights subsequently told me that they had found the evidence in my series so persuasive and so disturbing that they had met with their staffs to urge them to try to correct this bias.

After my series was published, I was asked to discuss it on more than a dozen

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radio talk shows. On one such program, Jeff Cohen of FAIR criticized my series. FAIR also issued a press release criticizing the series. Fair enough. If I can criticize others, I certainly can't — and don't — object to someone criticizing me. But amid the enormous torrent of mail and calls I received on the series, Cohen's comments barely registered on my radar screen. By the very nature of my work — writing, often critically, about my colleagues — I receive far more vigorous criticism than Cohen's on virtually everything I write. It's absurd and unfair to say, as he did in his letter to CJR, that I became "embroiled in a heated controversy" with FAIR and to imply that I considered him or FAIR an "enemy" and should thus have disqualified myself from reviewing for CJR a book by two of his FAIR colleagues.

The above notwithstanding, when CJR asked me to review that book in conjunction with two other books, I immediately disclosed, without any prompting, that I recalled that FAIR had taken issue with my abortion series. I asked CJR if, in light of that, I should not review this particular book. CJR said it saw no conflict of interest. I reviewed the books.

One final point: Cohen says in his letter that in the course of our exchange on that radio talk show, I "retracted" one of the "mistakes" FAIR says I made in my series. I have recently listened to a tape of that radio interview, and the only thing I said that could be remotely construed as a "retraction" or a "mistake" was my acknowledgment that while I tried to be extremely careful in my terminology, I inadvertently slipped once and referred to "abortion rights advocates" as "abortion advocates" — the only such slip among seventy-nine references to "abortion rights advocates" in the course of a four-part, 18,000-word series. Incidentally, in rereading my series to make that count, I see that I also slipped one other time — and called these forces "pro-choice." I guess Cohen didn't notice that.

DAVID SHAW
LOS ANGELES TIMES

MISCOUNT IN IOWA

♦ It's true *The Des Moines Register* is "redrawing its border," as Ira Lacher observed in "The Register Regroups," (CJR, May/June), but not in the way Lacher reported. The article said the *Register* would no longer deliver the weekday paper in twenty-one western Iowa counties, though some subscribers in sixteen of them could still get same-day mail service. What we actually announced is that we would no longer deliver the weekday paper in six western counties; an additional ten would have some delivery curtailment, and same-day mail ser-

vice would continue to be available to all statewide.

DAVID WESTPHAL
MANAGING EDITOR
THE DES MOINES REGISTER

NOT CHICKEN AGAIN!

♦ Dare I suggest that James Toedtman mythed the point of my essay on Castro-con-pollo ("Little Red Hen in the Castro Coop," March/April 1991) in his May/June letter ("That Castro Coop Scoop")?

The standard version of the legend is that Fidel and his party were thrown out of a posh midtown hotel for killing and cooking chickens *en chambre*, leaving their suites strewn with feathers. *New York Newsday* retold it, substituting swine for fowl. I traced it back to a *Daily News* "interview" with a Rhode Island Red hen.

In his letter, Toedtman, *Newsday*'s managing editor, concedes that the pigs were *de trop*, but clings to the legend. He quotes Edward Spatz, owner of the Shelburne Hotel, as telling reporters on September 19, 1960: "They're peeling chickens up in those rooms right now. And they're going to cook them."

Well, peel me a chicken. Toedtman did not respond to my request for the source of this quote. As it happens, during that week Spatz said nothing about fowl to either *The New York Times* or the *Daily News*, both of which made clear that Fidel left the hotel under his own steam, with considerable justification.

A quick recap: *El Diario* zestfully reports death threats against Castro; Elysee Hotel cancels his reservation; C.L. Sulzberger in the *Times* scolds our side for "immature bad taste" and "ugly sulk" toward Red visitors, supporting U.N. Secretariat's view that maybe New York wasn't the right host for its headquarters; Spatz yields to official appeals for space, telling the press he wrestled with his conscience and insisted upon, and obtained, official assurance in writing that he was doing his patriotic duty.

The Cubans stayed less than twenty-four eventful hours; enough time to barbecue a chicken, perhaps, but they were hardly out of sight of hundreds of cops, reporters, and sympathizers, and nobody mentioned birds. The patriotic Spatz declined to allow his guests to show their flag, and placed two large American flags in their conference room, according to Max Frankel's account in the *Times*. (Spatz also demanded a \$10,000 deposit, rejected a bond offered by the Cubans' lawyer, and finally, he said, got a guarantee from the State Department.)

Castro took off for the Hotel Theresa in Harlem, where the *Daily News* followed with a series that would not be out of place

in the *National Enquirer*: it was "girls, girls, girls" night and day, and bottles, food waste, and a torn slip in the corridors. (The manager told the *Times* that his guests were "very nice and well behaved.") The series culminated in that interview with the chick.

Since Toedtman says so, I accept that Spatz may have told some other reporters at some date that, yes, sure, the Cubans did pluck and cook fowl in their rooms. But those who believe it — and that's my point — would also believe any other fable that comes down the pike.

JOHN L. HESS
NEW YORK, N.Y.

WHAT'S NEW?

♦ In "Is the Most Popular Evening News Cast the Best?" (CJR March/April), Michael Massing asserts categorically that the "real news on Capitol Hill that day [December 5, 1990] was made not by [Secretary of State James] Baker," who dismissed the economic sanctions against Iraq as "totally ineffective," but by CIA director William Webster, who said that, if sanctions continued to hold, "Iraq's military would be unable to maintain its combat readiness for more than nine months."

He defends his wrongheaded position by citing *The New York Times* as having led with the Webster item, while ABC, CBS, and NBC led with Baker. No less categorically than Massing, I would argue that the *Times* was wrong and the three networks right. Webster's testimony did indeed run "directly counter to the administration's official line," but that didn't make it news. Baker's testimony was the clearest indication yet that the administration was not going to wait for the sanctions to work but was going to war, and that whatever the CIA director thought was irrelevant and would carry no weight in administration planning.

RICHARD COHEN
ADVERTISING/PUBLIC RELATIONS
NEW YORK, N.Y.

Michael Massing replies: *My definition of news is that which is new. Secretary Baker's testimony was not new. Ever since November 8, when President Bush announced that he was doubling the number of troops in the gulf, administration officials had issued one statement after another dismissing the effectiveness of sanctions. Just two days before Baker's testimony, for instance, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney had made virtually the exact same points in an appearance before the Senate Armed Services Committee. For the director of the CIA to testify that sanctions were working at a time when other senior officials were asserting the opposite certainly qualifies as news in my book.* ♦

CHRONICLE

THE BRITISH ARE COMING

HOW THE BBC IS ENLARGING ITS EMPIRE

With the help of modern technology and a gulf war that whetted Americans' appetite for foreign news, the voice of the venerable British Broadcasting Corporation is becoming an increasingly familiar sound on the FM dial.

In Boston, for example, WBUR went from using no BBC at all to broadcasting up to five or six hours a day during the war. Listener response was so overwhelmingly favorable, says general manager Jane Christo, that the station continues to air three hours a day of BBC news programming.

In Orlando, the war prompted WMFE to insert an hour of BBC news into its classical music programming each night. When the station asked listeners in March whether they liked the change, letters and calls ran more than four-to-one in favor of keeping the BBC in the schedule.

The American Public Radio network, which distributes BBC radio news pro-

grams in the U.S., reports that the number of its affiliates broadcasting BBC rose from 82 before the war to 108 after. Only two stations that came aboard during the war have since dropped out.

BBC correspondents have been heard on National Public Radio's *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered* for years, but it was not until 1986, when NPR's rival, American Public Radio, negotiated an agreement with the British network, that BBC programs such as *Newsdesk* or *24 Hours* could be heard here in their entirety. The launching of a special satellite and the completion of a fiber optic transatlantic cable in 1989, meanwhile, made high-quality reception available to APR's more than 400 affiliates. APR had previously relied on a telephone connection that provided uneven sound quality at best.

Bruce Theriault, APR's senior vice-president for network operations, attributes the BBC's recent success in part to Americans' increasing appetite

for "multiple editorial voices." But it was the war that gave many listeners and programmers their first extensive exposure to the British network. At WUKY in Lexington, Kentucky, general manager Roger Chesser says he found the BBC's war reporting "more thoughtful and balanced" than that generally provided by the American media.

While NPR remains the major source of news for most public radio stations, says Christo of Boston's WBUR, BBC programs fill gaps in worldwide coverage. "If something happens in Albania, the BBC already has three correspondents in the region so they can get the story right away," she says. "And in Africa or India, the BBC has a depth of coverage that NPR just doesn't have."

Bob Jobbins, editor of BBC World Service News, the network's radio and television news operation, describes the BBC style as the "exact opposite of CNN's stream-of-consciousness approach. We try to offer a sense of proportion by relating immediate events to the overall picture."

The jab at CNN is no accident. Radio

CJR/Keith Bendis



aside, BBC officials are preparing to challenge Cable News Network as the preeminent global television news service. In April, the BBC took the first step toward competing directly with CNN by developing a TV version of its *World Service News* and broadcasting it to Europe, along with entertainment, via its satellite subscription channel, World Service Television. The BBC plans to develop more such news and information programs and to distribute the channel to every continent by 1993.

Though they have no immediate plan to bring the channel to America, BBC officials are currently negotiating to sell their daily half-hour news and fifteen-minute business shows to U.S. cable stations. If all goes well, within the next year BBC "news presenters" Jack Thompson and Christabel King will become familiar faces on American television.

Piers Brendon, a British journalist and author of *The Life and Death of the Press Barons*, warns Americans not to become too enthralled with BBC's high-minded image: "The BBC may sound like the voice of objectivity, but it's not." Britain has no equivalent of America's First Amendment or Freedom of Information Act, and because of the BBC's quasi-official status — its budget is government controlled — the network is vulnerable to political pressure, Brendon says.

But Duncan Campbell, a British investigative journalist who has often been critical of the BBC, says the network's World Service has generally been free of the kinds of pressures facing its domestic-news counterpart. He notes that when the government tried to force the World Service to "act as a source of external propaganda" during the Falklands crisis, "they refused and the government was forced to set up its own separate channel."

Campbell attributes BBC World Service's recent push into television as a "direct result of Thatcherism." The former prime minister, he says, put the squeeze on the BBC, in an attempt to force the network to become "a market creature of the government's liking." Ironically, he observes, such economic independence may help assure its editorial freedom.

Rod Benson

Benson is a former CJR intern.

IS SPY COOL?

A 1980s 'HOT BOOK' HITS
A CHANGE IN THE WEATHER

When you've had all that fun with Donald Trump, what do you do now that The Donald has run out of cash and cachet? When New York's Downtown scene has lost its glitter, and no one cares for old jokes about table-hopping with Jay McInerney? When "Separated at Birth" is so widely copied that everyone forgets who invented it? When your magazine is struggling to stay on its nimble feet amid big shifts in the politico-economic winds?

Born in late 1986 when Wall Street was still soaring, *Spy* rose by satirizing New York's big-money movers and shakers, publicity hounds, and various self-promoters. When many of those same people fell to earth three or four years later, *Spy*'s fortunes plummeted as well. After shooting up to 150,000 virtually by word of mouth, circulation grew stagnant. Ad pages plunged from an average of fifty or more an issue to

about twenty this spring. Staff members were laid off, the publishing schedule was cut back from twelve issues to ten, and for a time the magazine seemed in danger of going under.

What went wrong? One obvious factor is the recession, which has been particularly brutal to small, independent, thinly capitalized publications. Another is the strain of trying to remain hip and funny month in and month out. A third might be called the zeitgeist factor, the fact that times change, attitudes shift, and what's caustically amusing one year may be merely caustic the next. "When the perception is that you're very, very

cutting edge and smart and a step ahead, everyone wants to read you and talk about you and advertisers want to be in your pages," says disgruntled ex-*Spy* investor and publishing director Steven Schragis. "When perceptions turn around, you become something to stay away from."

Spy's finances have stabilized since last year's dizzying plunge. After spurning an offer from Condé Nast owner S.I. Newhouse in 1988, *Spy* sold out two years later for around \$5 million to a group of investors that includes advertising mogul Charles Saatchi. Although the magazine is still losing money, the capital infusion gives it more time to try to get hot again.

For a time, the perception of *Spy* was that it was very hot indeed. Media mavens devoured its insider gossip about *The New York Times*, the television networks, and Hollywood. *Spy*'s highly mannered use of nasty appositives ("short-fingered vulgarian" Donald Trump, Abe "I'm Writing as Bad as I Can" Rosenthal, and so on) became a widely copied trademark.

It was its savage profiles, however, often filled with amazing inside dirt, that caused people to sit up and take notice — for better or worse. One article portrayed the



MAY 1987: Red hot and on the rise

publisher of an upscale giveaway magazine on Manhattan's Upper East Side as a raving, obscenity-spewing "harridan" who is ashamed of her working-class Jewish roots. She even gets trashed in the article by her own mother for being a social-climber and a snob. Another piece detailed what it said was the bizarre, scatological humor of a certain fashion publisher. A third tracked the evolution of self-obsessed columnist Bob Greene's hairpiece from the bushy early seventies to the tidied-up mid-eighties.

All of which had people buzzing for a while, until a certain reaction ensued.

"Did you know," asked a front-page story in the March 8, 1990, *Wall Street Journal*, "that a well-known executive ... actually ordered a female employee to carry a wine bottle filled with his urine' to someone at a party...? Do you care? It's in *Spy*."

"This was a story that was very honest about a guy who is very problematic and difficult," counters *Spy* co-founder Kurt Andersen. "All these are vigorously reported, factually unchallenged profiles of people whose behavior and beliefs are obnoxious. What are they saying? That we were mean for portraying [Avenue publisher] Judy Price's meanness? I just don't get it."

The thirty-six-year-old Andersen, who also writes about architecture for *Time* and contributes occasional essays to *Rolling Stone*, is known among some ex-staff members as the polite, well-educated half of *Spy*'s top duo. Strolling through *Spy*'s loft-like downtown offices (lots of brick, heavy wooden beams, and exposed aluminum ducts), wearing a pinstriped shirt and red paisley tie, he is the picture of the member of the upper-crust Century Association that he, in fact, is. Co-editor E. Graydon Carter, on the other hand, is less polished, despite his severe Anglophilic (he wears hand-tailored Saville

Row suits and writes a weekly column for the *London Evening Standard*). A 1989 investigation by *New York* magazine (a frequent *Spy* target) found that the Canadian-born Carter had embellished his résumé by saying he had graduated from college (he had not) and had written speeches for Pierre Trudeau (Trudeau's speechwriter had never heard of him).

Admirers portray Carter as an enthusiastic cheerleader for his overworked, underpaid staff, someone who dresses up as Santa at Christmas parties and has a rip-roaring time bouncing employees on his knee. Critics see the forty-one-

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year-old editor as enthusiastically adolescent. Carter himself admits getting carried away and spitting drinks at staff members during a raucous monthly "closing" party. "He's highly conscious of being one of the oldest people on the editorial side, so he thinks he has to act in a juvenile way," a *Spy* veteran says. "Or maybe he's just juvenile."

Having helped define one decade, can Carter and Andersen adjust to a new one? Jokes about the lean and hungry nineties have already been creeping into *Spy*'s pages — including one in the March issue about jobless college graduates "forced to live with their parents and work in tolerably 'brainy' minimum-wage jobs: clerk in bookstore, ... waiter in cafe that serves Celestial Seasonings teas, intern at satirical

monthly magazine." The May issue includes a profile of Los Angeles "Über-cop" Daryl Gates that, despite the obligatory style-obsessed put-down of "his blue doublet suit, powder-blue shirt, and matching powder-blue pocket square, blue foulard tie and very shiny black shoes," was surprisingly untrivial.

"1990 was kind of a boring year," says E. Graydon Carter, "but 1991 is

shaping up to be more exciting. You've got a city on the verge of collapse, the Palm Beach story, the Kelley book, and a war. This is a lot of stuff crammed into five months of what was supposed to be a very boring decade."

Yes, but will it be a decade for *Spy*? Some have their doubts. "Spy and Trump were locked in a weird *pas de deux*," says journalism professor Abe Peck of Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, "and I think they both waltzed off the poop deck together."

Daniel Lazare

Lazare is a New York writer.

CJR INTERNSHIPS

Applications are now being accepted for the fall program. Interns will work closely with editors on a wide range of research, writing, and production projects.

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MOSCOW RULES

CHECKBOOK JOURNALISM, SOVIET STYLE

Glasnost has been good for foreign reporters, but it has also brought complications. Along with openness came a less admirable characteristic of the Gorbachev era: the open-handed demand for hard currency. Members of Moscow's foreign press corps have been grumbling lately that some government authorities — both bureaucrats and elected officials — are asking to be paid for interviews, information, and access.

If foreign television journalists want to film the Moscow police in action, for instance, they have to pay. According to Vladimir V. Martynov, the Moscow police department's liaison for television journalists and filmmakers, the cost ranges from \$100 for a brief filming to as much as \$1,000 a day. Prepared

CHRONICLE

footage of sting arrests and other investigations goes for about \$200 a minute. "It all depends on what you want to film, what kind of firm you represent, and how long you want to use our employees," says Martynov.

The push for payments seems to stem from the Soviets' lack of understanding of the role of public officials in an open society, as well as from the pervasive desire for hard currency. Sometimes, journalists say, the demands go away when they are refused, and sometimes they don't.

In the case of the Moscow police, the Foreign Correspondents' Association complained about the payment demands in late 1990, and afterwards the police said they would no longer charge accredited print journalists for the privilege of riding along in patrol cars or observing them at work. Only television and commercial film crews would continue to be charged. For their part, the police say they are swamped by the number of people wanting to film night-

time operations. And police officials say the money gleaned from foreign correspondents doesn't go into officers' pockets, but is used to purchase much-needed technical equipment.

Meanwhile, the police aren't the only ones asking for money. In early 1990, a CBS crew from *48 Hours*, working on a story about crime in Moscow, first approached the Soviet Interior Ministry, which oversees the national police force. But ministry officials asked them for a television "edit set" — valued at around \$80,000. After three days of arguing, the crew pulled out. "You can get fired for [such payoffs] at CBS," says producer Andrew Tkach. They eventually filmed the Moscow police for a May 1990 segment called *Moscow Vice*. Tkach says the local police charged only a small amount for driver and escort services, not for access.

Foreign correspondents tend to blame each other for allowing the Soviets to get away with demanding higher and higher prices for things that ought to be free. Print journalists blame television journalists, whom they see as breezing into town with big budgets and loose ethics. Television reporters from small stations blame big American networks. Some Americans, in turn, blame the Japanese and the power of the mighty yen. And the Japanese blame the Americans for the money-talks mentality that the Soviets have so enthusiastically adopted.

Adding to the confusion could be the fact that some government officials apparently don't see the difference between paying an academic a fee to appear on television as an expert and paying a government official for information. Journalists say more and more analysts, meanwhile, are asking for more and more money. John Lombard, Moscow bureau chief for Australia's public radio and television network, tried arranging an interview with a Soviet newspaper commentator who, out of the blue, told him, "I'm too expensive for you — I stick with the Japanese."

Karen Dukess

Dukess is a Tampa-based writer and a contributing editor for the English- and Russian-language *Moscow Magazine*, where a longer version of this piece originally appeared.

A HEALTH QUIZ

1. What is the largest professional group in the U.S. health-care system?
2. What health-care group has the most hands-on contact with hospital and clinic patients, particularly in major areas of health care — such as AIDS, aging, drug addiction, and disease prevention — that are currently in the public eye?
3. What health-care group is the least quoted in newspaper health-care coverage?

BONUS: What conclusion can we draw from the above?

ANSWERS:

1. Nurses.
2. Nurses.

3. Nurses, according to an analysis of 423 health-care articles that appeared during the first three months of 1990 in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *the Los Angeles Times*.

The study, sponsored by *Nurses of America*, found that in stories in which at least five quoted sources were identified by occupation, nurses were quoted the least of twelve groups — 1.10 percent of the quotes — well below doctors (32.38 percent), somewhat below patients (2.75 percent) and family members (1.98 percent), and even below nonprofessional hospital workers (1.54 percent). In stories based on one main source of information, nurses were such a source just once (.24 percent) and nursing associations twice (.47 percent).

BONUS: Health-care coverage seems to have a blind spot. Rx: Reporters would do well to spend more time with the people who actually deliver the most health care and thus may know best how and where the system does and doesn't work. (Copies of the study may be obtained for \$3 from the Women, Press & Politics Project, P.O. Box 1018, Cambridge, Mass. 02140.)

M.H.

ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY

THE TRIBUNE COMPANY GOES ANTIESTABLISHMENT

On page six of the new Fort Lauderdale weekly *XS* is a column, headed "Notes From the Underground," which sometimes includes a "Fuck Censorship Department." An April piece on health-care costs starts this way: "Half the fun of the news business is publishing stories that will really piss people off."

Though it may sound like the work of renegade high school journalists, *XS*, which made its debut on January 16, is another serious attempt to capture those television-bred young adults who tend to shun daily newspapers. And, given its content, its owner is a surprise: Gold Coast Publications, a wholly owned subsidiary of the News and Sun-Sentinel Company of Fort Lauderdale, itself owned by the upstanding, tradition-rich Tribune Company of Chicago.

"This is a little bit out of the ordinary for our company, and it's been a very popular topic of conversation," says Mitch Golub, the *Sun-Sentinel's* deputy

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managing editor and chairman of the board that oversees *XS*. "The thing is, it's different. And large, publicly held newspapers do not do this every day, let alone during tough times."

Those tough times have taken a toll in the area. In February, the *Sun-Sentinel* dismissed forty-five workers (including five part-time newsroom employees), following layoffs in similar numbers at each of its daily competitors — Knight-Ridder's *Miami Herald* and Cox Enterprises' *Palm Beach Post*. But tough times don't diminish the desire of large publicly held newspapers to take on challengers, and *XS* takes clear aim at a rival that has the potential to wound: *New Times*, the three-year-old Miami-based alternative weekly.

If *New Times* didn't exist, says thirty-three-year-old *XS* editor and publisher Stephen Wissink, "I'm not sure *XS* would have come to be. All other papers down here were losing advertising and getting thinner. Everybody noticed that *New Times* was getting more advertising and getting thicker."

New Times typifies the success of the alternative press, which has roots in the counterculture and rose with its readers into affluence. It is one of three week-

lies — the others are in Phoenix and Denver — owned by New Times Inc., a company that expects revenues this year of \$20 million. The Miami paper, which has grown from an average of twenty-four to eighty-eight pages and whose circulation has climbed to 75,000, is expected to pull in \$3 million this year, enough to turn a profit two years ahead of schedule, according to Miami publisher Julie Felden. Moreover, its core readership of twenty- to forty-five-year-olds is a "retailer's dream," Felden says: 66 percent single, 70 percent white collar, with an average household income of \$47,800.

Both *XS* and *New Times* are free and distributed each Wednesday by bulk drop; both focus heavily on music, art, and entertainment and, to some extent, attract similar advertisers. But there the similarity ends. *New Times* articles not only tend to be longer but they offer more insight and better writing. Investigative reporting is a staple, and *New Times* regularly writes about the failures of mainstream reporting in Miami.

XS deliberately aims lower. Restaurant reviews come under the heading BURP! and regular features include a "Villain of the Week." The paper tends to lift occasional serious pieces from other publications — In



ATTITUDE: Stephen Wissink (left), editor of the Tribune Company's new weekly *XS*, is trying to set a tone that will capture some of publisher Julie Felden's readers and advertisers at the Miami-based alternative weekly *New Times*.

These Times, for example, or *Mother Jones*, the source of an April cover reprint on corporate polluters. One of its few recent pieces that was both solid and self-produced was a mischievous profile of a local attorney, Jack Thompson, a self-appointed censor of rap music and the like.

XS is produced in the *Sun-Sentinel's* new sand-colored, twenty-one story office tower. Editor and publisher Wissink is a former *Sun-Sentinel* assistant business editor. Some 23,000 copies of *XS* are being distributed these days, most of them respectfully full of advertising. But, says James Smith, the company's director of marketing, "It's too early on to say how successful this has been."

The journalistic reception for *XS* has been chilly. Take, for example, Rafael Navarro, a contributing writer to *The Miami Herald's* Sunday magazine. "*XS* is a case of too little about too much, dressed up in a hyperkinetic attempt to push all the right antiestablishment buttons, as broad and shallow as Roseanne Barr," he wrote recently in a column that failed to note his past employment as a *New Times* staff writer.

"They're not going to be able to come out with stories critical of local news coverage," Bruce Brugmann, president of the Association of Alternative Newsweeklies and founder of *The San Francisco Bay Guardian*, told another *Herald* reporter. "They're not going to raise hell. It's strictly a marketing device."

Wissink is tired of that charge. "Judge the paper for the paper, not for who has a financial interest in it," he says. He has been adjusting the paper's image lately, including watching the profanity more closely. "It was getting a little too gratuitous," he says. "But I'm not going to shy away from it if I think it makes a good journalistic point." He recently made such a judgment, replacing a columnist's "fuck that" with "to hell with that," toning down the language but retaining a sense of outrage on the pressing topic. The story was about banning skateboards at the mall.

Jeff Truesdell

Truesdell is editorial associate at The Weekly in Orlando, a "news and entertainment magazine" owned by The Toronto Sun.

#¢!@* YOU, TOO!

Sports reporters don't flinch from the raw facts of life, right? They're used to the blood, sweat, and tears of sports, used to hearing rough language, even to seeing grown men patting each other's hindquarters in public.

Maybe sports editors are more delicate. At any rate, it seems that strange things happen to what might be called locker-room prose between the time a reporter hears it and the time a reader reads it in the paper. Take coverage of the Barry Bonds-Jim Leyland dispute last spring, for example. As every sports fan knows, Leyland is the manager of the Pittsburgh Pirates and superstar Bonds was furious because the Pirates wouldn't renegotiate his contract. During spring training the two got into a shouting match.

Exactly what they said was, in several cases, left to the reader's imagination. *The Milwaukee Journal* reported that one of Leyland's comments was that Bonds could "get the ... out of here." What word was so shocking that the *Journal* felt obliged to resort to dots? Could it have been the F-word? Not according to accounts that appeared in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, the *Omaha World-Herald*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, *The Atlanta Journal*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and others. According to them, the unutterable word was "hell."

Leyland also apparently made reference to both his and Bonds's buttocks, which again posed problems for editors. *The Milwaukee Journal*, for instance, reported that Leyland said, "I've been kissing your ... for three years and I'm

not going to do it again." Had the A-word been used? Not if accounts in *USA Today* and *The Des Moines Register* were accurate, because they used the same Leyland quote with the word "butt" in the appropriate place. But were those papers' accounts accurate? Not according to the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, which used the same quote but quoted the manager as using the A-word.

The biggest mystery surrounds one of Bonds's words describing how he thinks others perceive him. In the Minneapolis *Star Tribune*, his quote became, "They've been saying for four years that I'm a (jerk)," with parentheses indicating editorial activism; the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* chose to use [a problem]; the *Omaha World-Herald* used three dots for the mystery word; *The Denver Post* used two dashes; *The Des Moines Register*, three; the Quad City, Iowa, *Times*, four.

Wide World



FOUL! Barry Bonds and Jim Leyland of the Pirates exchange views.

Those dots and dashes used by many sports page editors raise a lot of questions. "I've taken your — — — for three years," *The Des Moines Register* quotes Leyland as saying. What do those dashes mean — that Leyland had

used a naughty three-letter word instead of the four-letter one that may come to mind? Dots can be just as confusing. "Let's get the ... show over with or go home," the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* quoted Leyland as saying. In the same story, Leyland is quoted as saying of Bonds that "he's not going to run this camp.... He can just go home." Does this second set of dots stand for yet another obscenity or is it simply an ellipsis? The bewildered reader is left wondering, hey, what are they leaving out this time?

And, in general, hey, who do sports editors think they are protecting from what when they shy away from using words that are no rougher than the games men play?

Dick Haws

Haws teaches journalism at Iowa State University, in Ames.

OPINION

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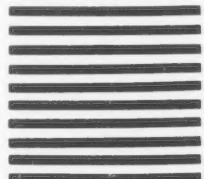
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DARTS AND LAURELS

◆ **DART** to *Best of Business Quarterly*, for superselective editing. Billed as "A Collection of Outstanding Business Articles" culled from some 450 periodicals and books, edited and published by Whittle Communications, and mailed free of charge to 350,000 senior corporate executives, *BBQ*'s Winter 1990-91 issue featured, among other noteworthy pieces, one by Sandy Tolan on the *Grapes-of-Wrath*-like chaos visited upon Mexico by the influx of U.S. companies in search of dirt-cheap labor. The companies, as identified in the article as it originally appeared in the July 1, 1990, edition of *The New York Times Magazine*, include RCA, Xerox, Chrysler, United Technologies, ITT, General Instrument, Eastman Kodak, IBM, and General Electric; in the *BBQ* reprint, however, the name of one of those companies — Xerox — is not to be found. It is readily visible elsewhere in the issue, though, in some twenty-two pages of Xerox ads: Xerox — "The Document Company" — is *BBQ*'s corporate sponsor, and its one and only advertiser.

◆ **LAUREL** to *The Miami Herald* and staff writer Tom Dubocq, for getting through to the phone company's unlisted numbers. Since his ringing revelation in November 1989 that Southern Bell had underpaid, by hundreds of thousands of dollars, the commissions that the utility is required to pay to government agencies on calls made from pay phones on public property, such as airports, courthouses, and jails, Dubocq has stayed on the story line, reporting on the utility's denials of wrongdoing, claims of technical error, refusal to produce records, and termination of a whistleblower; he has also covered the state's fifteen-month investigation which, according to the attorney general's office, was prompted by his articles. In February 1991, Dubocq was able to report that Southern Bell had agreed to repay \$5 million in back commissions and interest. By March, he was covering four other investigations of Southern Bell for allegedly withholding millions of dollars due customers for out-of-order phone lines.

◆ **DART** to the New Mexico Broadcasters Association and its president, John Dunn, for deserting the troops in the face of enemy flak. When member station KOAT-TV in Albuquerque aired its five-part series

"Power, Politics, and Persuasion" — alleging, among other things, that at least one state senator had taken \$1,000 in bribes for favorable action on a bill; that lobbyist-sponsored fun-filled weekends in Las Vegas may have a legislative price; and that senate staff salaries had gone up some 96 percent while teachers and other state employees had been forced to hold the line — legislators retaliated with proposals to license and impose new taxes on the news media. Dunn was quick to take cover. In a March 1 letter to the senate president pro tem, who had led the charge against KOAT-TV and called reporter Larry Barker a "sleazebag," Dunn carefully distanced himself and the NMBA from the KOAT report. "I personally, senator, am very distressed about this whole situation," Dunn wrote. "As a small-city broadcaster from Tucumcari, I can totally appreciate how much disruption it is having on the orderly process we've asked our citizen-legislators to pursue. Please ... be assured that the overwhelming majority of the broadcast industry are most appreciative of the tremendous time commitment made by all of the body in the service of New Mexicans." KOAT-TV and its general manager, Wayne Godsey, have since resigned from the broadcasters association.

◆ **DART** to the Pasadena, California, *Star-News*, for turning a silk purse into a sow's ear. When the rival *Los Angeles Times* recently announced that the cost of home-delivery subscriptions was going up by twenty-eight cents a week, the *Star-News* deemed the increase worthy of mention on its own front page. The boxed ten-paragraph "Note to Readers" was tackily laced with quotes from publisher Al Totter detailing his paper's lower weekly, monthly, and yearly rates as compared with those of the *Times*.

◆ **LAUREL** to the Columbus, Ohio, *Dispatch* and reporter Michael Berens, for seeing the forest and the trees. Using the computerized databases of local newspapers, Berens studied reports on the deaths of nine women whose bodies had been found along interstate highways in Ohio, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and New York between 1985 and 1990. The comparative analysis — which for bureaucratic reasons no law enforcement agency at any level had managed to do — revealed such

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unmistakable similarities that, within days of his page one March 10 piece, an investigative task force was at work in Ohio, the FBI was on the scene, and other links to other murders in other states began to emerge. By May 4, evidence was pointing to a single suspect in Florida in at least three of the serial killings.

◆ **LAUREL** to the Syracuse, New York, *Post-Standard* and reporters Todd Lighty and Tom Foster, for giving a full-court press to possible violations of NCAA rules by the Syracuse University Orangemen, the basketball team that, as one player put it, the people of Syracuse "live for." Based on a seven-month investigation, the 30,000-word series documented allegations that the university's basketball program had, among other out-of-bounds practices, allowed past and present members of the team to accept cash, merchandise, services, and discounts from prominent boosters and local businessmen; had pressured a professor to change a player's grade so that he would be eligible to play in an important game; and had wooed away a player from a rival team by arranging a job for his father. The series, which led to a university inquiry (currently under way) inspired few cheers from readers, who in published letters to the editor berated the "rag" for its "snide and superficial sniffing," its "disservice" to the community, its "scurrilous defamation of a fine institution," and its "real bad taste." Others canceled their subscriptions to the "sorry excuse for a newspaper" and urged that the reporters and editors responsible be "let go."

◆ **DART** to KNBC-TV, Los Angeles, and its commentator Mike Gage, for amphibious journalism. In the wake of the area's water crisis, Gage, who also happens to be a commissioner for the city's Water and Power Department, recently voted against a request from KTTV-TV and KCBS-TV, two of his station's major competitors, for the release of the names of the 100 largest residential users of water in L.A. (According to the *Los Angeles Times*, which reported on the apparent conflict of interest, similar lists have been made public in San Diego and Beverly Hills.)

◆ **LAUREL** to *The Albuquerque Tribune* and the New Mexico Press Association, for an imaginative project designed to instruct future journalists — and present officials — in the theory and practice of open government. Participating in the project were seventy-five high school journalism students, each of whom was given a packet containing the exact wording of the Open Meetings Act and the Inspection of Public Records Act, along with an assignment to put the law to the test. Results were revealing: while some students readily

obtained most of what they asked for, others found officialdom far from open. A clerk in Santa Fe refused to give information on the school's operating budget; a magistrate in Farmington refused to let students see the driving and criminal records of school officials; the head of security for Albuquerque public schools refused to release statistics on weapons and drugs on campus. (Although this last, as *Albuquerque Tribune* editor Tim Gallagher noted in a February 9 column, did eventually find its way to the student journalist — in an anonymously delivered plain brown envelope — such a route is not normally available to members of the general public.) The project's sponsors aim to use the results to persuade New Mexican legislators of the need to broaden access laws.

◆ **LAUREL** to the Sunbury, Pennsylvania, *Daily Item*, for walking a straight journalistic line. Among the more sobering items summarized daily from district police and court reports was an unwatered-down account of charges filed against a Sunbury resident for driving under the influence of alcohol and driving at an unsafe speed. The May 6 item included the man's name, age, address, and the circumstances of the accident that led to his arrest. It also noted his occupation: editor of *The Daily Item*.

◆ **DART** to the Arkansas *Democrat* and racing columnist Terry Wallace, for off-track journalism. In its April 3 edition the paper ran Wallace's twenty-nine-column-inch piece touting the "magic" of Oaklawn Park — the quality of its horses, the largeness of its purses, the "positive attitude" of the crowd "toward life." But it failed to take even passing note of the writer's paid position as track announcer and p.r. man for Oaklawn Park. In contrast, another writer who recently came to the *Democrat* stable moved far upfront. In a March 28 Counterpoint piece describing the terms of his new contract for a three-times-a-week column, John Brummett, formerly of the rival *Arkansas Gazette*, revealed the "one rule" at the *Democrat* that "was made perfectly clear to me at the outset: A columnist is not to criticize an advertiser in regard to that advertiser's business." Although he expected that "99 times out of 100" the rule would pose no problem, Brummett told his readers, "there might come a time when an advertiser took an action that I deemed to be worthy of commentary in the public domain.... If and when that happens, I will remain silent, and now you know why." ◆

This column is compiled and written by Gloria Cooper, CJR's managing editor, to whom nominations should be addressed.

Guns and bullets weren't used to stop Yahweh Ben Yahweh. Ink was.



Some citizens of Opa-locka, Fla., angry and outraged, wanted justice. They wanted to take back their streets, their apartments, their meager possessions from an untouchable cult leader. They didn't know what to do. Sydney P. Freedberg did. Leading a team of reporters from Knight-Ridder's Miami Herald, she unraveled the mysteries of Yahweh Ben Yahweh and his Temple of Love: his sect's accumulation of wealth and property, brutal discipline, influence with politicians and business leaders, kid glove treatment by the law enforcement communities—and allegations of long, unsolved murders, a beheading, a public execution. In all, 14 homicides. She traced defectors and their families across the nation. Some dissidents had gone underground. Others, once questioned by police and the FBI, were afraid. Some wondered what ever

happened to the case. Finally, on Nov. 7, 1990, SWAT teams and federal agents arrested Yahweh Ben Yahweh, self-proclaimed Son of God, and 16 disciples. For murder. Fourteen times. The Miami Herald's news staff received the 1991 Pulitzer Prize for spot news reporting on the Yahwehs. Knight-Ridder journalists in Washington, Philadelphia and Detroit were Pulitzer finalists. Knight-Ridder newspapers have won 57 Pulitzers, including 29 in the last 7 years. In Miami, 13 reporters worked on the Yahweh story. The newspaper staff produced a hundred stories in the past two years. Despite veiled threats, a contempt of court motion, government denials, Freedberg never let up. Few newspapers would have committed the resources and time to such a sensitive subject. But

The Miami Herald is a Knight-Ridder newspaper.



KNIGHT-RIDDER

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The John Swett Awards are named for the founder of the California Teachers Association, who was also the state's fourth superintendent of public instruction. The Awards honor individual journalists, newspapers, journals and broadcast stations for outstanding coverage of public education issues. Nominations for the awards are made by local CTA affiliates, but the judging of the entries is done by a panel of professional journalists.

I n d i v i d u a l A w a r d s

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Diana Walsh
San Francisco Examiner

Tom Batiuk, *Cartoonist*
Funky Winkerbean Cartoon
Special Award Winner

Stuart Glascock
Daily Breeze, Torrance

Ari Soglin
West County Times, Richmond

Dianne Barth
The Stockton Record

Michael Trihey & Tamara Welch
The Bakersfield Californian

Bob Johnson
Coast Weekly, Carmel

M e d i a A w a r d s

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Mountain Democrat, Placerville

KPFK-FM, North Hollywood

KNBC-Channel 4, Burbank

The Walt Disney Company &
The Disney Channel, Burbank
Special Award Winner



nea national education association

Ed Foglia, President Ralph A. Flynn, Executive Director
Ned Hopkins, Director, Information and Development Tommye Hutto, Manager, Communications Sandra Jackson, Media Consultant

JULY/AUGUST 1991

Les Stone/Sygma

Desperate Kurdish refugees rush a U.S. helicopter to get supplies

AFTER
THE WAR

TEN DAYS THAT SHOOK THE WHITE HOUSE

BY
DANIEL
SCHORR

Score one for the power of the media, especially television, as a policy-making force. Coverage of the massacre and exodus of the Kurds generated public pressures that were instrumental in slowing the hasty American military withdrawal from Iraq and forcing a return to help guard and care for the victims of Saddam Hussein's vengeance.

The Kurdish tragedy was only one in a season of worldwide disasters — the typhoon in Bangladesh, earthquakes in Soviet Georgia and Costa Rica, famine in Africa.

Daniel Schorr is senior news analyst for National Public Radio.

Scenes of suffering flitted past American television audiences, a succession of miseries almost too rapid and stark to be absorbed.

But the suffering of the Kurds stood out from the others. This was not a natural catastrophe, but a man-made disaster, and one that had a special claim on the American conscience. It was America, after all, that had invaded Iraq and shaken loose the underpinnings of authority. It was America's president, George Bush, who, on February 15, called on the "Iraqi military and the Iraqi people" to rise up and "force Saddam Hussein ... to step aside." It was President Bush who, on February 27, had ordered an abrupt

The Bush administration seems to work on the premise that print does not move people; only television does

cessation of hostilities, leaving the Iraqi dictator with enough armor and aircraft to put down Shiite and Kurdish uprisings. And, finally, it was the Bush administration that, after first warning the Iraqi regime not to use helicopter gunships against its own people, then stood by while they were used to strafe Kurds fleeing to the mountains in the north.

Americans became dimly aware, in the month after the war stopped and the rebellions had started, that their government, having burst the floodgates in Iraq, was trying to run away from the flood. There was even a whisper of tacit collusion with the dictator whom Bush had called "worse than Hitler." *The New York Times* reported on March 27 that the administration had "decided to let President Saddam Hussein put down rebellions in his country without American intervention." This in the name of avoiding being dragged into what the president called "a Vietnam-style quagmire," and in response to Saudi Arabian and Turkish concerns about the possible disintegration of Iraq.

The administration had every reason, at first, to believe that the public supported a policy of getting the troops home quickly and avoiding involvement in ethnic strife. There was some criticism, but it was mainly confined to the editorial pages of newspapers. The Bush administration, like the Reagan administration, seems to work on the premise that print does not move people; only television, with its visceral impact, does.

The Kurds had been let down by America before. As disclosed in the report of the House Intelligence Committee in 1976 (of which I obtained a draft before the House voted to suppress it), President Nixon had the CIA sponsor a Kurdish uprising against Saddam Hussein, starting in 1972, as a favor to the Shah of Iran. When the Shah and Saddam settled their differences, support for the insurrection was withdrawn and the Kurds were abandoned to an Iraqi attack. ("Our movement and people are being destroyed in an unbelievable way, with silence from everyone," Mustafa Barzani, father of the current Kurdish leader, wrote to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger on March 10, 1975. "We feel, Your Excellency, that the United States has a moral and political responsibility towards our people, who have committed themselves to your country's policy.") Thousands were killed and 200,000 fled to Iran, of whom 40,000 were forcibly returned to Iraq.

I reported this on CBS in 1976, but it was a "tell story" without the pictures needed to let the audience expe-

rience the dimensions of American betrayal. And it made little impression. So now, in March 1991, the Bush administration was not overly concerned with "tell stories" and commentaries about how America was turning its back on the Kurds.

Jim Hoagland wrote in *The Washington Post* of "an American bug-out from the Persian Gulf," and William Safire wrote in *The New York Times* that the president had experienced "a failure of nerve." But "a senior presidential aide" told *Time* magazine, "The only pressure for the U.S. to intervene is coming from columnists and commentators." And a "top White House aide" (probably Chief of Staff John Sununu in both cases) told *Newsweek*, "A hundred Safire columns will not change the public's mind. There is no political downside to our policy."

Famous last words, politically speaking. What the White House did not seem to realize was that, by the end of March, the issue, as perceived by the public, was changing from military intervention in support of a revolution to compassionate intercession for the victims of Saddam Hussein's genocidal methods. By then, while hundreds of thousands of Kurds and Shiites were being driven into Iran, where they could not be easily seen by the world, hundreds of thousands more Kurds were being driven into the rugged mountains bordering Turkey, where they could be vividly witnessed by television.

The vast panorama of suffering, and perhaps even more the individual portraits of agony, seemed overwhelming. Not easily forgotten were scenes like that of the little girl, her bare feet sinking into the freezing mud, or of the little boy, his face burned, possibly by napalm. The anguished face of a child peered up from the cover of *Newsweek*, with the caption, addressed to Mr. Bush, "Why won't he help us?" In a BBC report on *The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour*, a woman asked, "Why did George Bush do nothing?"

The quagmire-shunning Bush administration was slow to react, concentrating on a formal cease-fire to speed the return of American troops and continuing to emphasize its refusal to be involved in "an internal conflict."

April 2: On a golf course in Florida, in strange juxtaposition with evening news scenes of shivering and starving refugees, the president brushed off questions about the continued Iraqi use of helicopter gunships against the Kurds, saying, "I feel no reason to answer to anybody. We're relaxing here."

A senior official told *The Washington Post* that the



reticence was deliberate: "Engaging on this issue gains us nothing. All you do is risk raising public concerns that are not there now...."

April 3: By now the administration was becoming aware of American and European "concerns," and had begun scrambling for a policy of compassion without intervention. On the Florida golf course, Mr. Bush said, "I feel frustrated any time innocent civilians are being slaughtered. But the United States and these other countries with us in this coalition did not go there to settle all the internal affairs of Iraq."

Later that day came a written statement in the president's name, departing from the administration's passive role: "I call upon Iraq's leaders to halt these attacks immediately and to allow international organizations to work inside Iraq to alleviate the suffering.... The United States is prepared to extend economic help to Turkey through multilateral channels."

April 4: Appearing with Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu in Newport Beach, California, Mr. Bush said, "We will do what we can to help the Kurdish refugees." But he also stuck with the position that no American parent "wants to see United States forces pushed into this situation, brutal, tough, and deplorable as it is."

By this time, the Kurdish rebellion all but crushed, television was showing a mass exodus into the mountains. A widely distributed Associated Press photo showed a ten-year-old girl in a hospital in northern Iraq being comforted by her mother. The child had lost a hand and an eye in an Iraqi helicopter attack.

April 5: In Newport Beach, a dogged President Bush declared, "We will do what we can to help there without being bogged down into a ground-force action in Iraq." Again, the press office, hours later, came up with a written new policy — the Air Force would start dropping food, blankets, and clothing to Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq.

As a public-relations answer, the air drops did not go over very well. The supplies landed in random places; television showed where some Kurds had been killed by falling bales.

April 8: Europe was looking at television, too, seeing reporting — particularly in Britain — that was often more vivid and comprehensive than American television was showing. At a European Community meeting in Luxembourg, British Prime Minister John Major proposed the creation of a protected "enclave" for the Kurds in northern Iraq. Secretary of State James Baker, visiting Luxembourg, saw on television what Europeans were seeing. Then, at the bidding of President Bush, worried about an impression of American insensitivity to the refugees'

plight, Baker proceeded to the Turkish border. The seven-minute visit turned into a photo opportunity of a special sort. It focused on scenes of desperate Kurds, one saying, in English, "Please, Mr. Baker I want to talk to you. You've got to do something to help us."

April 11: A Reuters dispatch from Washington noted, "Searing pictures of suffering Iraqi refugees have clouded America's gulf war triumph and given President Bush a devilish political problem." Part of his problem was that his vacillation on the Kurdish issue had helped to bring down his approval rating from 92 to 80 percent in a *Newsweek* poll (78 percent in a Gallup poll).

April 12: The administration announced that American troops would be going back into Iraq as part of a relief operation called "Provide Comfort." Military encampments would be set up, guarded by coalition forces, eventually to be turned over to the United Nations. The announcement came so suddenly as to catch off base

Defense Secretary Richard Cheney who, an hour before, had told a news conference that there had been no decision to "actually put forces on the ground in Iraq."

Within a two-week period, the president had been forced, under the impact of what Americans and Europeans were seeing on television, to reconsider his hasty withdrawal of troops from Iraq. As though to acknowledge this, Mr. Bush told a news conference on April 16, "No one can see the pictures or hear the accounts of this human suffering — men, women, and, most painfully of all, innocent children — and not be deeply moved."

Military victory over Iraq was threatening to turn into political and moral defeat. The polls that had shown Americans overwhelmingly wanting troops home in a hurry were now showing that Americans did not want to abandon the Kurds, even if that meant using American forces to protect them.

It is rare in American history that television, which is most often manipulated to support a policy, creates an unofficial plebiscite that forces a change in policy.

In a column on May 5, *New York Times* television critic Walter Goodman underscored what the medium had wrought when "it compelled the White House to act despite its initial reluctance." But he also raised the question, "Should American policy be driven by scenes that happen to be accessible to cameras and that make the most impact on the screen?"

The question is a reasonable one. But, in the case of the Kurds, it was not the pictures alone that forced the change. These were not random pictures of random suffering, but pictures that dramatized the suffering of a people for whom Americans felt some responsibility. It was that combination that overwhelmed governmental passivity. ♦



A Kurdish mother and her child, who lost a hand and an eye in an Iraqi helicopter attack

photo: Wide World

AFTER
THE WAR

THE KINGDOM AND ITS MESSENGERS

The outsiders are leaving Saudi Arabia. Did their presence affect the telling of the news? BY STEPHEN FRANKLIN

The day Iraq invaded Kuwait, Saudi Arabia's news media assumed a traditional pose: they ignored it. They were silent the next day, even as frantic Saudis huddled by short-wave radios or, if they lived near the borders, watched television news from other Arab nations. By the third day some newspapers were writing about "Iraqi aggression" but they offered few details. Others were not so gutsy, referring only obliquely to "tensions in Kuwait."

Jasr al Jasr, managing editor of *al Jezira*, recalls feeling quite comfortable with his paper's decision to wait until the third day — and a statement from the government — before telling its 100,000 readers what the rest of the world already knew: that Saddam Hussein's armies had swept through Kuwait and were parked five to ten miles from the Saudi border.

Outside the *al Jezira* office the daily sandstorm has died down. It is early on a warm, dry evening in Riyadh, the shimmering, modernistic Saudi capital, a desert city of steel and glass. Sixty years ago, when King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman bin Feisal al Saud was bringing together the tribes that would form Saudi Arabia, Riyadh was only a collection of dark-brown mud houses in a poverty-stricken country disconnected from the outside world by its puritanical view of Islam and its extreme social conservatism. Even today the *Mutawin*, the bearded religious police, patrol the city's glitzy malls and markets with long wooden sticks, looking for stores open at prayer time or for men cavorting with unmarried women.

Jasr al Jasr is editing a correspondent's article, handwritten but sent in by fax, while approving last-minute advertisements and checking proofs of the next day's newspaper. He wears the traditional long white gown and is seated, curiously, at a desk beside the glass doorway, where a security guard might sit. He likes to keep a close eye on things.

Stephen Franklin, a reporter for the Chicago Tribune, traveled to Saudi Arabia in May for the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists. Franklin, who speaks Arabic, was the Tribune's Middle East correspondent from March 1988 until June 1990; he returned to the region to cover the gulf war.

Was he ordered by officials to stay quiet on the August 2 invasion? He looks surprised at the question. Editors at two other newspapers privately admit that they had been so ordered. But Jasr, a journalist for the last nineteen years, smiles and denies receiving pressure from anyone but himself. "In Saudi Arabia we have an understanding," he says, tapping his head.

The understanding is this: the media will not report on sensitive affairs until the government has formulated its policy on them; journalists are not independent voices; the news they produce must not break the rules by challenging the government, questioning friendly nations, casting a bad light on Islam, or mentioning sex.

The country has nine privately owned Arabic-language newspapers, three English-language newspapers, nine weeklies, nine other publications, the government's Saudi Press Agency, two government-owned television channels, and several government-owned radio stations. They are all responsible for "correctly" informing eight million native Saudis, spread out across a sun-baked land the size of Western Europe, 70 percent of them still illiterate and a small number of them astonishingly wealthy.

The Saudis, the royal family that has ruled by absolute decree since 1932, are ever conscious of the resentment of other families and ever fearful of Arab nationalism, radicalism, communism, socialism, or even a milder form of Islam. So they work to make sure that their citizens see the world exactly the way they do.

But the gulf war brought about unexpected challenges — challenges that the ruling family is still coping with. From Iraqi Scud missiles to U.S. Army tanks, Saudis found themselves confronted with strange new images in their isolated land. On a family outing to the local Baskin Robbin's ice cream shop, for example, *abaya*-draped Saudi women, who are not allowed to drive, might encounter a U.S. army truck driven by female soldiers in battle fatigues.

The average Saudi, meanwhile, was baffled about why Saddam Hussein, who had always been praised in the Saudi media, would do what he did. Questions were suddenly being asked about all the money Saudi Arabia had given to Iraq and the PLO over the years, and about the need to call on the help of half a million non-Moslem soldiers to guard

the guardian of the holy shrines of Mecca and Medina, the king's primary job description.

At the beginning of the war, many Saudis thought that the sudden exposure to the West would somehow jolt their country forward. Forty-three women, thinking that the time had come to press for women's rights, even dared to drive cars in downtown Riyadh last November. Most of them lost their jobs and passports, and their husbands lost their drivers' licenses.

Religious extremists issued audiocassettes denouncing the nation's moral decay. Moderate Moslems replied with cassettes denouncing the extremists. Businessmen and intellectuals privately told the royal family that it was time to allow greater freedom. In May, hundreds of university professors signed petitions calling for political reforms. And, in a stunning development, so did the *Ulema*, the religious leadership, in a petition calling not only for stricter enforcement of Islamic law, but also for "justice" in the distribution of Saudi wealth, an end to official corruption, due process in the courts, and greater freedom of the press. Never before had the *Ulema* raised its voice for such changes.

Faced with a swirl of change, the regime called on the media to preserve a sense of order

None of these fascinating and significant political developments were reported in the Saudi press. Faced with the swirl of change, the regime called on the media to preserve a sense of order and calm. Even war coverage was unspecific and upbeat. Front pages were filled with the comings and goings of the king, messages relayed from friendly Middle Eastern leaders, and announcements of new economic advances. Television news, read by a rotating series of readers, offered the same safe fare. No dark clouds. No hints of the country's serious economic problems. And never any pictures of Saudi women, let alone women driving cars.

The government relied on journalists like Hashem Abdu Hashem, the editor-in-chief of *Okaz*, an articulate, confident, and politically careful man in his early forties. "There is no difference between the government and the people. We have the same objectives and the same role to play," he says. His newspaper is located in Jidda, the port city on the Red Sea that is considered Saudi Arabia's commercial and intellectual capital.

Jidda is an older, less conservative city than Riyadh; many of its families did not come from the barren Arabian desert but were foreigners involved in trade or who settled there after making their pilgrimage to nearby Mecca. The city's *Balad* quarter, with its cramped, crumbling, white-washed buildings and brightly colored wooden patios, is a reminder of what Saudi cities once looked like, before

petrodollars turned them into runaway Texas boom towns.

Hashem Abdu Hashem's large, comfortable office is in the heart of a modern building equipped with state-of-the-art newspaper production equipment. The gulf war, he says, helped *Okaz*'s circulation, pushing it over 250,000. It has since settled down to about 210,000 copies daily, still the nation's largest daily, he says. (Since circulation figures are secret, it is impossible to check Hashem's claims.) Like most Saudi newspapers, *Okaz* dutifully carries a picture of King Fahd on its front page almost daily.

Hashem's view of journalism as a partner with the government in guiding Saudis is shared by most editors, whose ranks are carefully screened by government officials and whose newspapers enjoy free air delivery inside Saudi Arabia and receive annual subsidies from the government. The Saudi media were much more outspoken before the Saud family unified the kingdom in 1932, and then again during the 1950s, when Egyptian and other Arab journalists flocked to the oil-rich country. But by the 1960s the new pattern of government control was set. Newspaper owners, mostly wealthy merchants with close ties to the regime, did not complain.

Nor do most journalists. A bureau chief in Riyadh readily concedes that he never strays from the government's statements. To do so, he says, would only mean trouble. And why would he want trouble? He has a house, a car, and a job that pays well. We are talking in the lobby of a four-star hotel full of Western businessmen and well-to-do Saudis, and his eyes ceaselessly roam the huge, noisy room. Is he afraid of being watched? No, he replies; it is just that a meeting with a foreign journalist might be misunderstood by officials.

Indeed, it is clear after spending some time in the kingdom, as Saudis call their country, that news is considered by the royal family as almost as essential to its continued power as oil. Without a parliament, political parties, labor organizations, or any other forums for free discussion, the house of Saud thrives on news sculpted to its needs:

- When Egypt announced in May that it was pulling its troops out of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia — a surprise reversal of an earlier agreement — Saudi newspapers did not point out that this was a blow to the dreams of Arab unity and the agreed-upon strategy of using the Egyptians as a permanent defensive shield for the region. Saudis who rely on the Saudi press had no idea that there was new friction between their country and brother Egypt.

- Nor would the average Saudi reader have any idea just who the Palestinians could possibly be negotiating with at proposed peace talks, after U.S. Secretary of State James Baker swept through the region in May and the Gulf Cooperation Council, which includes Saudi Arabia, agreed to send an observer to such talks. While editorials made it clear that the U.S. was now a trusted friend, newspapers gave their readers no clue that Arab countries were even considering negotiations with Israel.

- Nor would the Saudi reader or viewer learn much about Kuwaiti political opposition to the ruling al Sabah family since Kuwait's liberation — for reasons not hard to imagine.

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If domestically produced news must be controlled, foreign-produced news and cultural influences must be filtered, too. This task falls to teams of censors from the Information Ministry's Publications Department, which carefully searches foreign publications and excises all criticism of the government, positive stories about Israel, and negative stories about Saudi Arabia's allies. Arab publications that print offending articles are banned and Western magazines are trimmed to meet Saudi sensitivities.

The censors purge liquor ads and use dark felt-tipped pens to cover over pictures showing exposed areas of women's bodies. Audio and videocassettes are screened for offending sounds and images, too. A Madonna cassette will keep them busy, and the censors reject any tape that has a song with a suggestive title. They make sure that Bugs Bunny is not heard telling his cartoon friends that he "crosses his heart," clearly an allusion to Christianity. The censors have yet to figure out American rap music, however, and let most of it go by.

The West, for its part, has been given little opportunity to learn about Saudi Arabia. Major Western news services maintain no permanent offices in the country, according to government officials, and only journalists from friendly Arab countries are allowed residence. Prior to the war, no more than a handful of Western journalists were allowed to visit the kingdom at a single time, and, as one Western diplomat recalls, most of these "were writing about bedouins and native jewelry."

At the height of the war, of course, more than 1,400 foreign journalists were on hand. Although Saudi officials say no foreign journalists were expelled, Western diplomats recall at least a dozen who were threatened with losing their visas. And once journalists left the country, Saudi officials say they did not re-admit those who continually wrote "incorrect" stories.

Despite all these controls, there is dissent in Saudi Arabia. It exists underground, nourished by a flourishing fax network. Western-educated Saudis ask foreigners to fax them anything printed about their country from overseas, and they share the best faxes they receive. A university professor offers me his faxed copy of Judith Miller's article "Saudi Arabia: the Struggle Within," from last March in *The New York Times Magazine*, with high recommendations. A Saudi businessman, whom I have just met, asks if I have seen *Playboy*'s April issue with a Saudi pin-up. I can tell from his look what is coming next: he would like to view it, via fax.

And there are Saudi journalists among the dissenters, although I suspect they are few. At least they are hard to find.

After mulling over the state of Saudi journalism, one high-ranking editor surprises me by suddenly admitting that he has a sense of despair over the lack of freedom. "We don't have reporters," complains the editor, who was educated in the U.S. "We have messengers. They go to the ministries, pick up the reports, and print what they are told."

To be a rebel in Saudi Arabia hardly means advocating an overthrow of the system. One editor was fired for printing a wire-service story that noted Syria's violent 1982 suppression of the infamous uprising by Sunni Moslems in Hama. The story was considered an insult to the Syrians. Another editor was removed following publication of an article that cited the Tunisian government's handling of Islamic fundamentalists. It was viewed as unfriendly to the Tunisians.

Some of the rules are clear, written down in regulations and statements that have accrued over the years. But new rules can arrive over the telephone any time of day. During the war, for example, journalists were told not to criticize the U.S. At the peak of the war, journalists were also encouraged to vilify Saddam Hussein; later the use of his name was banned. Editors tried to cope with that order by writing about the "Iraqi government" or the "Baghdad regime."

In fact, the worst part of the system, complains a veteran Saudi journalist, is that most of the rules are unwritten. And since there is no prior censorship, staying out of trouble means knowing what to avoid. The result, he says, is that "you become your own prisoner." He has been warned twice by the government that his position on the gulf war was not "correct." A third warning will end his career.

"The rules have reached the point where I do not want to go on," says another young editor. "I will lose my self-respect."

The penalty for breaking the rules varies. Journalists who ignore the warnings from the Information or Interior Ministry can temporarily lose their bylines or their jobs; but they can also be hauled off to the prisons run by the General Investigation Directorate, the *Muba'ath*.

Saudi Arabia is not Iraq, where independent-minded journalists can disappear forever. But it is a place where journalists are arrested by the *Muba'ath* and put in solitary confinement and questioned around the clock. They are not charged with specific offenses, and they do not have the right to see a lawyer. It may take their families weeks to find out where they are, and even then they may not be able to see them. The journalists stay in prison until the government concludes that they have learned their lesson, or until their appeals have reached an influential member of the ruling family. Once out of prison, they may find it impossible to find a job for months or even years because they have been blacklisted by the government.

There is even a punishment for silence. A columnist's decision to stop writing is seen as a sign of dissent, which invites an interview with officials. "I want to get out of this, but I can't do it suddenly or else they think I'm doing it in protest," says an editor at a major newspaper in Jidda.

The situation encourages the absurd. Television news readers worry that they may innocently emphasize the wrong word during a broadcast, angering officials, who always suspect political motives. The Ministry of Information is jokingly called the Ministry of Denial, because it constantly issues statements denying foreign reports about Saudi Arabia, baffling Saudis who have no idea of how the denial fits into a larger story. The ministry



Wide World

CONNECTIONS: Two U.S. soldiers and a Saudi woman in the traditional Arab abaya wait their turn at a pay telephone.

issued a statement in May, for instance, denying "foreign rumors" that King Fahd would soon travel to Jerusalem. Saudis wondered why on earth he might do such a thing.

In the absence of real reporting, fantasies and conspiracy theories flourish. "People believe whatever they hear because they have no news," says an economics professor in Riyadh. He adds that he has yet to read an accurate article about the Saudi economy's post-war slump.

In the lobby of the Hyatt-Regency hotel in Riyadh, where most of the foreign reporters gathered during the war, I meet a young Saudi journalist who has come to say good-bye to a veteran British radio reporter. He had befriended a number of foreign reporters during the war, and is proudly reciting the dates they had come and gone.

He is one of those Saudi journalists who thought the gulf crisis would change things, that because of it the government would have to allow more leeway. Now he is doubtful. There is a polite sadness about him as, sensing an end to his contact with the West, he offers his last farewell.

He is thinking about quitting journalism and starting a career in business. "There will be no changes," he says in English honed to perfection by listening to the BBC. "They have too much to protect."

But it is hard to know if that is so, even for Saudis.

The war did bring changes, some quite vast. The thirst for news drove more Saudis to their radios; many stores quickly sold out their supply of short-wave sets in the first days of the crisis. Foreign, non-Arab stations were the favorites, especially the BBC's Arabic-language service.

Probably the greatest surprise was the appearance of Cable News Network on Saudi television. In the first few days of its coverage of the air war in January, Saudi television allowed several hours of live broadcasts. That caused too many problems, however, and the broadcasts were subsequently taped for showing later so the censors could deal with them first. After the war, Saudi TV dropped CNN. Government officials say they are negotiating a contract with the network, but many Saudis doubt they will ever see CNN again.

Nor are they hopeful that women news readers will return to the government's English-language television station. They were removed after the driving demonstration in November, with television officials privately explaining that only men could present the news about a "serious situation like the war."

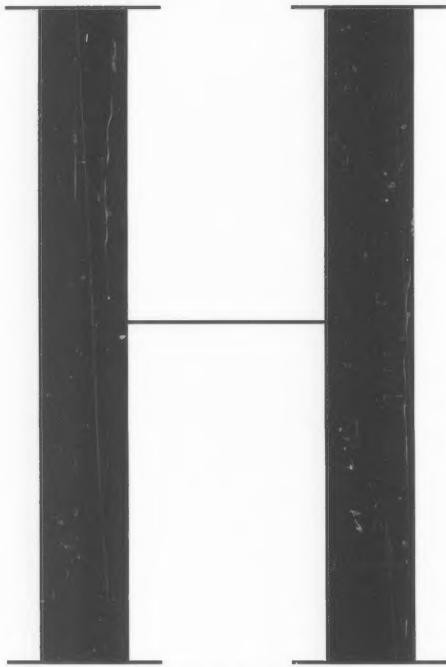
Yet across the land, Saudis are reaching out to the world in whatever ways they can. As many as 50,000 of them, according to Western diplomats, now have satellite television dishes, which cost about \$25,000 each and are technically illegal for home use. Many others pay about \$700 for a tap from their neighbors' dishes. Still others are installing antennas large enough to bring in TV programs from nearby Arab countries. Few Saudis expect the satellite-dish explosion to drastically change their society, however, since most of the owners are wealthy people who travel to other countries and have already tasted their forbidden fruits.

In Riyadh, I meet a journalist who does not share the despair of the young man in the lobby of the Hyatt. "The war opened the doors and windows of Saudi Arabia," he tells me, "and they cannot be closed like before."

A photographer, he prides himself on his brilliant color pictures of the endless Saudi desert and of the farming village that he comes from. When he was younger, he was involved with political activists — "a foolish mistake," he says, one that cost him months in prison. Yet he was recently arrested again by the *Muba'ath* for what officials consider a journalistic "error." Like his country, he seems complicated and full of contradictions.

He is extremely guarded in what he will say, yet, without being asked, tells me I may use his name. He criticizes journalists "who do not want to fight and just want to keep their jobs," yet he goes out of his way to praise the ruling family for improving life in Saudi Arabia. To several of my questions about his country, his future, he gives a similar and indirect answer: "Somebody said there is no freedom. But freedom is inside oneself. If it is inside you, you will always have freedom."

MAKE IT RIGHT. .



ow are you?"

she asked politely as the elevator doors were closing, and her question sent a chill down my spine. So early in the morning her concern had an existential ring. "How am I doing?" was always the question for anyone working at Condé Nast. "Fine," I said, "but — not quite awake, perhaps."

Wrong answer. She raised one eyebrow slightly. God forbid you should look sleepy, tired, or weary. Predators are known to attack the weakest animals in the herd. Even if you are sick, you should never admit it — someone might take advantage of it and move in on your territory. "Try exercising," suggested the *Vogue* editorial assistant as the door opened on her floor. She waved at me and stepped out briskly, and I took a mental note of the way she wore her Alaïa — with a white tee and a simple row of pearls. Perfectly understated. I had to close my eyes: six months ago I couldn't spell Azzedine Alaïa; today I was analyzing and deconstructing

Véronique Vienne is creative director at Cato Gobé & Associates, an international design consulting firm.

his fashion statement at 7:45 in the morning. I had been an eager student. To stay with the pack at Condé Nast one has to be swift, opinionated — and ruthless.

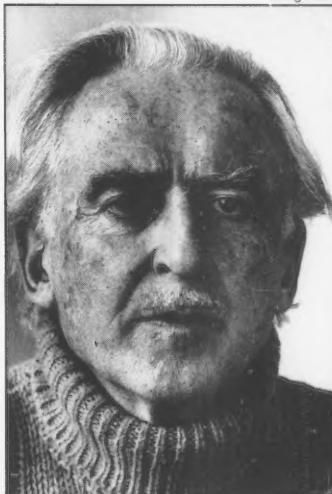
Much of the learning at 350 Madison Avenue, where *Vogue*, *Glamour*, *Mademoiselle*, *Self*, *Vanity Fair*, *HG*, *GQ*, and *Brides* are housed, is done while riding the elevators. (The four other properties owned by Condé Nast Publications — *Allure*, *Details*, *Gourmet*, and *Traveler* — are located elsewhere in Manhattan.) In the elevators, the company's vertical campus, employees trade remarks, swap ideas, and steal looks at each other. Celebrated models, smart editors, known writers, occasional movie stars, and some of the cutest photographers in the business are among the passengers. For many people the journey from the lobby to their floor, and vice versa, is a chance to make important eye contacts, check out their inklings about upcoming trends, and record pieces of other people's conversation. For others it can be a journey to the center of some rather unpleasant emotions — greed and envy, for starters.

Like the arcades, galleries, and passageways

An inside view of corporate

of the past in which

people met to discuss the affairs of the day, elevator banks today play a major role in the social life of a community — decisions may be finalized behind closed doors, but a lot of the deliberating is done in transit between floors. Every CNP employee has a favorite elevator story, some innocuous, others quite dramatic. A friend of mine, for example, got fired between the twentieth and the fifteenth floors by his boss, a woman he had known for ten years. "She was going away on a brief vacation," he recalls, "and asked me to help carry her bags to the lobby. So here I am, holding her fancy pieces of luggage and she says, 'Darling, I had a wonderful idea: Why don't you become a contributing editor?' We were alone in the elevator and she was just chatting away. 'I am fired!' I asked. 'Nothing like that, really, dear,' she exclaimed. So I took



*Mentor and tormentor,
Alexander Liberman has
been the guiding spirit
of Condé Nast
Publications for fifty years.*

her to her limo and on the way back up I came across the personnel director in the elevator. 'If you have a minute, follow me into my office,' she suggested. It was perfectly orchestrated."

To get a "private" moment with some very busy people, it is not an uncommon procedure at CNP to ride with them up and down. I have dropped 240 feet with an editor while discussing a layout and holding her Limoges teacup brimful with Earl Grey, milk-please-but-no-sugar. I have seen art directors in Armani suits step in, escorted by photographers wearing fatigues; assistants in Romeo Gigli sent down to the lobby to buy candies. Everyone is on the lookout. Just get in, take a spin, and see the CNP world.

This constant back-and-forth, up-and-down, and in-and-out movement is emblematic of the Condé Nast corporate culture, where hiring and firing are both dramatic and sudden. "The seas are often choppy and careers can sink like a stone," wrote *The New York Times* about CNP in 1989. It is change for the sake of change. Condé Nast

by VÉRONIQUE VIENNE

— showing a rare gutsy spirit and manifesting ahead of time that she was suited for the top position. Employees who try to keep a tight hold on their job miss the point and fail to comprehend the reason why they were hired in the first place: to contribute to the molecular activity at the magazine and add a new layer of complexity to the ongoing drama.

Everyone who works at CNP can look forward to getting in and out of favor as often as one rides up and down the famous elevators — at least twice a day. "They keep changing the rules on you," explains an editor who was hired for a specific job, promoted twice in a short time, and then suddenly fired.

Your job description bears very little resemblance to what's expected of you. There is an implicit commitment to extravagance, and logic is frowned upon. "When they say, 'Let's turn right,'" says an insider, "it doesn't mean they have decided to turn right; it only means that they are talking about turning right. Actually, they probably intend to turn left." This atmosphere creates complex rituals of commitment and sacrifice; the creative process is an act of renunciation and immolation: first you fight for your idea, then you give it up — and leave it to others to either complete or destroy your project.

War correspondents must feel the way I did the day I arrived from San Francisco in 1989 to become the art director of *Self* magazine: I was sent to the front — the corporate suites on the fourteenth floor — where a classic CNP power struggle was under way. There I met the man known as a mentor and a tormentor, a man many magazine people both respect and fear, Alexander Liberman. For fifty years the creative force behind the Condé Nast Publications group of magazines, Liberman is a monumental figure. Facing him was Anthea Disney, the editor-in-chief who had hired me. Rochelle Udell, considered by some to be CNP chairman S.I. Newhouse's choice as successor to

culture at Condé Nast

management

philosophy mirrors the industry it serves, the world of fashion where the only certainty is the knowledge that the present fad will soon be outmoded.

When you cast away last season's favorite, you create a vacuum, a fleeting weightlessness and a sense of expectation that is often more compelling than anything you could imagine in its place. People who understand this principle sooner or later find their way to Condé Nast. One of the most colorful editors-in-chief, *Self* magazine's Alexandra Penney, used to give away her *entire* wardrobe once a year

THEN TOSS IT AWAY

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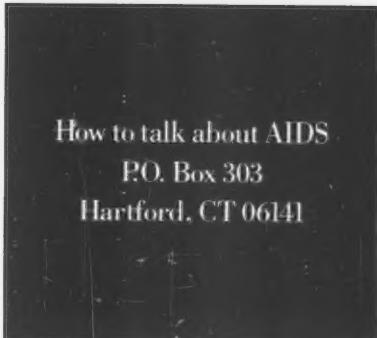
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If you find it difficult
to talk about, write:



How to talk about AIDS
P.O. Box 303
Hartford, CT 06141



A policy to do more.

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Liberman, was trying to act as a benevolent adviser to Anthea, while at the same time negotiating her own political status. Twelve weeks later, Disney "resigned." She announced her departure the day my furniture arrived from the West Coast; I remember searching through cardboard boxes for a pair of scissors to clip the story in *The Wall Street Journal*. Disney's departure, the *Journal* said, was due to her "direct and frequent run-ins with Alexander Liberman ... [who] wanted to become more involved in the look of the magazine. He started calling the shots."

I figured my days were numbered, but before I left I wanted to experience for myself life under Liberman's notorious

editorial command. "Consistency is the sign of a small mind," he told me for openers. "Don't be stylish, you'll be dated," he would then admonish. And he kept after me: "*Un peu plus de brutalité, s'il vous plaît, ma chère amie*" (a little more brutality, please, my dear friend), he insisted when my fashion layouts looked too "nice" to him — and my heart would sink. I was at the mercy of a man who was so smooth he never made a sound when entering a room.

Contrasting with his cool and civilized demeanor, Alexandra Penney, the new *Self* editor-in-chief, was boisterous, loud, and uninhibited. The author of several best-selling sex books and a TV personality, she was a character out of a Broadway musical. Her corner office, overlooking Forty-fifth Street, was only a stone's throw from Times Square, and she produced there

one of the most entertaining shows in town. Editorial meetings were her matinee performances. I would sit among the audience — editors who, like me, had dropped everything just for a chance to attend — and watch her take the stage. If you liked American culture, you had to like her, and Alex Liberman was no exception. He treated her with deference, the way tourists treat Mickey Mouse when they run into him in the streets of the Magic Kingdom. Soon I realized that Alex and Alexandra, these two unlikely characters, empathized with each other because they were both performers.

Liberman is not the calculating Machiavellian figure he has been described as: he has no Grand Plan. Rather, he

is improvising, playing a role and enjoying it. Almost eighty, he is an impressive actor. Every morning he gets his cues from his secretary, who functions as his booking agent: he is expected at *Vanity Fair* for a cover problem; he needs to schedule forty-five minutes at *Vogue*, where a major photo shoot is being edited; around noon he should make an appearance at *Self* to meet the decorator who is redesigning the reception area; in the meantime, the *Mademoiselle* editor-in-chief is on hold, calling from Switzerland. As soon

There is an implicit commitment

as he gets his script he

makes the rounds of the magazines and every situation becomes material for his dramatic interpretation. In what has turned out to be a fifty-year engagement — culminating as editorial director of CNP — he has never sought publicity for himself. Like the comedian who does not perform for his critics and cares only about his audience, Liberman measures success in newsstand sales figures and lives for the imagined applause of the sound of pages turning.

Unlike the younger art directors who collaborate with him and want to show that they are on the cutting edge of graphic design, Liberman knows how to underplay stylistic fads. I have seen him pick a second-rate photograph for its unexpected grace and sneer at slick pictures because they were devoid of "charm." Photographers sometimes called his layouts sadistic — he would not hesitate to crop half of a perfectly good picture if he thought it would add energy to the page, and he loved to create typographic havoc between images and text just to surprise his audi-



UPI/Bettmann

Three of Condé Nast's best known past and present editors are Diana Vreeland (inset, left), editor-in-chief of *Vogue* until 1972; Alexandra Penney (right, standing at an editorial meeting), recently appointed editor-in-chief of *Self*; and Anna Wintour (inset, right), editor-in-chief of *Vogue*.



ence. He may shock readers, but he never intimidates them — and that is his great talent.

Much to my surprise, I survived in this reckless universe more than a couple of months. I attributed my staying power to the fact that, being French, I shared some of Liberman's points of reference — he left Paris for the States the year I was born there. It helps when two people can enumerate the same metro

stops. But there was a limit to how much mileage I could get out of our common heritage. It all started, typically, with an elevator incident. My niece from Seattle was in town and, like every teen in America, she was dying to visit the *Mademoiselle* office. I couldn't arrange that, because fraternizing between magazines is not encouraged at CNP, but I gave her a grand tour of *Self* instead. A cheerleader and a basketball star, she was everything the Condé Nast elevator crowd is not: naive, fresh, and trusting. And then there was her hair, long, curly, and layered — *all wrong*, of course. As I took her back to the elevator landing, we bumped into Liberman. She kissed me on both cheeks, called me "Auntie," and, as I watched in horror, she got into the elevator with him. "Howdoyoudo?" I heard her ask as the doors were closing. I just stood there while all the blood in my body descended to my feet, following my mind into the depth of my fear — and at that moment I knew I soon would be fired.

I remember going back to my office and putting my head on the desk, with the cool Formica right against my cheek. I guess I was tired. The charade was over for me. I

to extravagance, and logic is frowned upon

told — and joined the ranks of ex-staffers who are nevertheless thriving in New York City.

The impressive roster of women who had the honor of being terminated by CNP turned out to be an intriguing and glamorous crowd. I have traced the lineage as far back as 1920, to Dorothy Parker, who got the ax from Frank Crowninshield, the founding editor of *Vanity Fair*, for her blunt theater reviews that alienated the pretty actresses who were guests at the publisher's celebrated social gatherings. Then I discovered Clare Booth Brokaw, who in 1931 submitted to her boss, Condé Nast, the prototype of a weekly picture magazine she thought should be called *Life* — a concept he did not understand and categorically rejected. Yet both women remained good friends of Nast until his death in 1942.

Getting fired from CNP became a painful experience only in later years, when, under the Newhouse ownership, the company lost some of its class pretension and social polish. The first highly publicized unelegant removal took place in 1972, when *Vogue*'s brilliant editor-in-chief, Diana Vreeland, was replaced by Grace Mirabella. In 1980, Edith Raymond Locke, who had been editor of *Mademoiselle* for nine years, was sent packing. In 1987, Louis Oliver Gropp, *House & Garden*'s editor-in-chief, learned that he had been replaced by Anna Wintour during his vacation, when he called the office from a pay phone. Under Mirabella's direction, *Vogue*'s readership tripled, but when her time was up, in 1988, she learned that she had been fired from a friend who heard it on TV. In the late eighties, the competition was fierce; powerful editors and art directors came and went — not just Disney, but also Lloyd Ziff, Valerie Weaver, Ruth Ansel, Guillaume Bruneau, and many, many more. The marketplace was flooded with bright, able, and enterprising magazine professionals with stories to tell — yet, strangely enough, not willing to talk about their experience. "I would rather not think about it," typically said



David Turner/Women's Wear Daily



John Sotomayor/The New York Times

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Among the many Condé Nast editors summarily dismissed during the '80s were Anthea Disney (left) of Self and Grace Mirabella of Vogue.

former CNP art director when I asked him how he left the company. "I've got better things to do — don't you?" No one I spoke to wanted to be mentioned by name. "I learned a lot from Condé Nast, and in the end it was a positive experience," said an editor who was fired a couple of weeks after I was, "so I want to leave it alone — and be a lady."

In fact, nobody seems to understand the impulse to keep quiet on the subject of dismissal better than Liberman himself, who has been fired at least three times in his life, including once by Mehemed Fehmy Agha — alias Dr. Agha — his predecessor at *Vogue*. The legendary Turkish art director canned the young Russian graphic artist one fateful Friday fifty years ago, after the newcomer had spent only one week on the job. The following Monday Liberman was scheduled to meet Nast, and he boldly decided to keep the appointment. During the conversation with the aging publisher, he talked about his experience in Paris and the awards he had won during his already brilliant career, but never saw fit to mention that he had already been hired — and fired — by the irascible Dr. Agha.

"Well," concluded Nast at the end of the interview, "a man like you must work at *Vogue*." Apparently neither Agha nor Liberman ever talked about the incident again, but a showdown was inevitable, and two years later the efficient young man replaced his boss.

Although unique by contemporary standards, Liberman's consuming sense of style was not uncommon half a century ago. In fact, he had a role model in the person of Frank Crowninshield, whose influence on the Condé

Nast culture can still be felt. Like Liberman a man of great charm and education, he inadvertently defined the editorial tone for all CNP magazines when he explained that he wanted *Vanity Fair* to be a publication "that is read by the people you meet at lunches and dinners." (Nast was more explicit; he once wrote about *Vogue*, "[We] must conspire not only to get all [our] readers from the one particular class to which the magazine is dedicated, but also rigorously exclude all others.") Crowninshield was so taken with stylistic concerns that, according to a 1942 profile of him in *The New Yorker*, "he ... edits his incoming mail punctiliously before throwing it in the wastebasket."

Liberman's editorial direction is better understood in conjunction with his art. He has managed to become, in his spare time, an artist of international fame, whose monumental sculptures can be seen on campuses and urban plazas. A respected painter as well, he knows how to take chances with colors, textures, and shapes. He manipulates the elements of the magazine page — the headlines, the blurbs, the text, and the photographs — in the same way he utilizes the huge scraps of steel or the buckets of paint out of which he creates his art. Copy for him is a plastic medium, and words are as evocative as colors; to run a big quote across a page is like applying a thick slab of paint on a canvas.

By posterizing words, playing with them as if they were pictures, the Liberman look trivializes the purpose of language; and this is perhaps the reason he has brought so many editors to grief. I remember Anthea Disney's last confrontation with him. We had driven out to Warren, Connecticut, his summer retreat, to get his approval of the latest *Self* magazine layouts. He received us in his painting studio, a whitewashed loft carved out of an old barn. With the light streaming down from the skylights, the canvases leaning against the paint spattered walls, and the smell of linseed oil and turpentine in the air, the place was evocative of an artist's atelier in some provincial town in the south of France, where, as a child, I used to spend my summer vacations. Imprinted as I was by Proust, Montaigne, and Cézanne, I was overwhelmed by a kind of nostalgia. But Anthea remained focused and alert as she watched Alex study the work we had spread out on the table between sketch pads and bundles of paint brushes.

"This is not acceptable," I remember him saying about a modest layout for an article exploring the predicaments of ethnic women in the workplace. "It's too static, there is not enough energy," he said. He was looking back and forth at Anthea and me, waiting for one of us to agree with him and pledge our support with a promise to jazz things up. But doing so would have meant violating the spirit of the story. "Can't you do something?" he said, turning violently toward me. "Don't you understand what I am talking about?" I took one last look at Anthea, who stood eloquently still. "Yes," I said at last. "I understand. I know what you mean. I'll fix it."

But I couldn't really fix it. At CNP you don't ever fix things. You throw them away. ♦

IN 1861, THE SOLDIERS MARCHED OFF TO WAR AND THE ARMED SERVICES YMCA WAS THERE WITH HELP AND SUPPORT.

HISTORY DOES INDEED REPEAT ITSELF.

The wars have had different names, different objectives, but the commitment from the YMCA to our troops has never varied.

From the Civil War to the World Wars to the Gulf War, through the years of peace in between, the Armed Services Y has been there asking, "What can we do?" and "How can we help?" The result is 130 years of experience in developing the skills, expertise and programs to provide support for the families of the men and women of the armed services.

Last year, before the crisis, they helped over 500,000 individuals, including single and married military members, spouses and children. This year, in a time of war and postwar, they expect that number to double as the Armed Services Y responds with the help of hundreds of community YMCAs.

Our active duty enlisted and their families are under tremendous stress. There are cries for help from thousands of reservists and their families, as well. So many young families were caught unprepared. It will be a long time before their recovery is complete.

The crisis facing our young military has created a crisis for the Armed Services Y as well. And they desperately need your help.

I would like to ask you to join Phillips Petroleum Company in supporting this fine organization in any way you can. Throughout history, our enlisted have never delayed in their response to us. How can we delay in our response to them?



C. J. "Pete" Silas
Chairman
Phillips Petroleum Company



For more information about how you can help our U.S. military personnel and their families, please write: Armed Services YMCA of the USA, National Office, 6225 Brandon Ave., Suite 215, Springfield, Virginia 22150-2510, or call 703-866-1260.

THE KITTY KELLEY SYNDROME

Why you can't always trust what you read in books

BY STEVE WEINBERG

"In any nonfiction book ... it is presumed by the reader that the facts have been checked and are accurate, and that the book therefore is to be relied on. In most publishing houses, however, a copy editor simply cannot check everything.... A lot of very famous authors are really quite sloppy, and both editor and copy editor simply have to live with it and keep as many obvious errors as possible from slipping through to final copy."

from Who Does What and Why in Book Publishing,
by veteran editor-publisher Clarkson N. Potter

"Neither the editor nor the copy editor should be expected to serve as researcher or co-author. You are the authority ... don't expect your editors to check every fact, as they would in a newsmagazine."

Samuel S. Vaughan of Doubleday,
addressing authors in Editors on Editing

"Out there, where folks are reading their papers and cruising their shopping mall book marts, they're scratching their heads. How could the nation's biggest publisher print nearly a million copies of a bare-knuckles attack on a former First Lady without knowing for certain that everything between the covers was true? Isn't Simon and Schuster accountable for the accuracy of the books it publishes?"

from an article by Paula Span, part of
The Washington Post's coverage of Kitty Kelley's Nancy
Reagan: The Unauthorized Biography

Steve Weinberg, a contributing editor of CJR, has investigated the accuracy of books as an author, as an editor, and as a reviewer. In the interest of full disclosure it should be noted that Weinberg was sued for libel in Great Britain, where truth is no defense, by Armand Hammer, the subject of a biography by Weinberg. The suit ended with Hammer's death in December 1990.

All the media attention devoted to Kitty Kelley's biography of Nancy Reagan, published by Simon & Schuster, had some beneficial fallout: a few news organizations examined not only what Kelley wrote, but also how she knew it. It was a rare instance in which journalists examined a book's accuracy on the news pages.

From the first sentence of the biography, Kelley began taking liberties. That sentence reads: "Two entries on Nancy Reagan's birth certificate are accurate — her sex and her color." Actually, it appears that all the items on the birth certificate are accurate. What Kelley apparently meant is that Nancy Reagan later may have told lies about certain items.

Item after item in Kelley's book has been questioned. A *Newsweek* team led by Jonathan Alter stated: "Sarah Brady, wife of former Reagan press secretary James Brady, convincingly denies they were excluded from White House social functions to avoid reminding Nancy of the assassination attempt on her husband." Alter and team also noted, "Mike Wallace, an old friend of Nancy's who despises Kelley, says her third-hand story about his encounter with Nancy's foul-mouthed mother in Arizona is partially accurate but wrongly dated by about ten years." The article also convincingly questioned a date-rape allegation against Ronald Reagan that Kelley included, uncritically, in her book.

The same week Simon & Schuster shipped Kelley's book it published a Ronald Reagan biography by *Washington Post* reporter Lou Cannon. The contrast was stark, *Newsweek* noted: "No one has to ask whether to believe Cannon when he writes that Reagan preferred watching *The Sound of Music* to studying his summit briefing books. Kelley's credibility is much shakier. Good biographies depend on more rigorous standards than quotation marks around the word luncheon to suggest a White House affair with [Frank] Sinatra."

Cannon's biography was praised in part because his book is painstakingly documented and because he has built a reputation for accuracy. That raises the question of where to place Bob Woodward on the spectrum. Woodward is the author or co-author of six important bestsellers — *All the President's Men*, *The Final Days*, *The Brethren*, *Wired*, *Veil*, and *The Commanders*. Only *Wired*, a biography of John Belushi, contains end notes. The sourcing on the other books is impossible to determine on most pages unless the reader is an insider at, respectively, the White House, the Supreme Court, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Pentagon. Even Kelley's copious but imprecise sourcing on her biographies of Frank Sinatra and Nancy Reagan is better than Woodward's. Woodward, however, has a better reputation for accuracy because (tautology noted) nobody has proved that his books contain inaccuracies. Should his publisher let him play by his own rules? Woodward insists that on-the-record interviews and other specific sourcing would impede his efforts, but other authors — such as James Bamford writing about the National Security Agency in *The Puzzle Palace* — have covered controversial public affairs topics while providing copious end notes.

Controversy over the veracity of Kelley's Nancy Reagan biography should have been no surprise, for two reasons — Kelley's past performance and the frequent disregard for accuracy in trade book publishing.

Reviewing Kelley's biography of Jackie Onassis twelve years ago in *The Nation*, Richard Gilman wrote that "almost nothing she claims to be quoting has the slightest ring of authenticity," then went on to provide examples. Published in 1978 by Lyle Stuart, *Jackie Oh!* contains no footnotes or end notes; the bibliography is superficial. In the acknowledgments, Kelley thanks forty-five sources, but it is usually difficult, and sometimes impossible, to determine who told her what.

Kelley's 1986 biography of Frank Sinatra, while more thoroughly documented — it contained chapter notes, a fuller bibliography, and 857 interviews as tabulated by the author — prompted questions about accuracy nonetheless. Some of the research was brilliant; she demonstrated more fully than previous authors the crooner's influence at the White House during various administrations, his violent streak, and his links to organized crime figures, for example. Some of her findings, however, were unsubstantiated gossip or came from others' work previously published in newspapers, magazines, or books — work that may have contained inaccuracies to begin with and that was used by Kelley without question. Because of the imprecise way Kelley constructed her chapter end notes, much of her information cannot be verified by the average reader.

After the Sinatra biography was published, by Bantam, journalist Gerri Hirshey produced a three-part unauthorized profile of Kelley for *The Washington Post*. Kelley failed to cooperate in any way. The series revealed Kelley's fabrications about her own life and convincingly cast doubt on parts of her Sinatra research.

The sometimes shaky factual foundation of the Sinatra book did not prevent it from becoming one of the biggest-selling biographies in publishing history. So Kelley, despite her less-than-sterling reputation among sundry reviewers, journalists, and publishers, commanded a multimillion dollar contract for the Nancy Reagan book.

PUBLISHING'S DIRTY SECRET

Kelley's most recent bestseller is symptomatic of publishing's dirty secret — few nonfiction books are checked for accuracy. As a result, inaccuracies abound.

It could be worse, of course. Because many authors possess not only pride, but also research skills and high standards, numerous books that purport to be serious non-fiction are indeed mostly accurate, serving as imperfect but nonetheless indispensable research material.

That said, far too much inaccuracy makes it into print. Almost every edition of *The New York Review of Books* and the book sections of *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, and the *Los Angeles Times* contain reviews that expose factual errors.

Meanwhile, book publishers have little incentive to change their ways. Trade publishing is a for-profit endeavor;

or; spending money for fact-checking would cut into profits. Moreover, few readers pay attention to which publishers are responsible and which are not; for whatever reasons, there is little brand-recognition among consumers of books. Many consumers are aware that the *National Enquirer* is an unreliable newspaper, but they have no idea which book publishers are the industry's *National Enquirer* equivalents.

Publishers have plenty of "good" excuses for their failure to check for accuracy besides bottom-line considerations. It is hard to find outside experts to vet manuscripts and, even when the right expert is available, the process is time-consuming. The proper comparison, some publishers contend, is not with newspaper or magazine articles but with columnists, who blend fact and opinion to disseminate a point of view. If publishers brought out only those books they knew beyond question to be completely accurate, the argument goes, many would never reach readers, thus inhibiting the free flow of ideas. Finally, publishers say, truth established beyond a reasonable doubt, truth with a capital T, is unachievable; readers will believe what they want anyway — if they are skeptical, let them prove error.

CHAPTER AND VERSE: GETTING DOWN TO CASES

There are instances of publishing house editors knowing about inaccuracies but pushing ahead anyway. Brad Miner made a rare public confession to such a sin in *National Review* six years after the deed:

In 1984, I spent a week locked in an office with David Yallop, editing *In God's Name: An Investigation Into the Murder of Pope John Paul I*; this so my then employer, Bantam Books, could publish it as an "instant hardcover".... Yallop knew I thought his book proved none of its fantastic claims.... He never actually named the murderer, you see, and nervously feigned opacity whenever I pointed it out. The book was published, sold well, and received a lot of attention, most of it (as I'd predicted) negative.

In God's Name lacks source notes and a bibliography. Despite Miner's misgivings, it also lacks any warning to readers. As for Yallop, he explained away his heavy reliance on anonymous sources by raising the specter of murder should their names be revealed. But, Yallop asserted, there was no need to worry about accuracy: "I can assure the reader that all the information, all the details, all the facts have been checked and double-checked to the extent that multiple sources were available. I take the responsibility for putting the evidence together and for the conclusions reached."

A handful of book industry observers took that assurance with a shovelful of salt. Edwin McDowell, the book beat reporter at *The New York Times*, commented that Yallop "does not always say which fact came from which source, and therefore some people consider such 'documentation' pointless. Worse yet, it suggests that his shocking conclusions may have come from some perfectly reputable library included in his list, without giving the reader a way to check this information. The Vatican press office last

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week denounced the book's conclusions as 'absurd fantasies,' adding, 'It is shocking and deplorable that anyone could so much as think let alone publish theories of this kind.'" In the post-Watergate age, however, during which official denials have come to be regarded as automatically suspect, the Vatican's statement may well have added to Yallop's credibility among many readers.

In the same 1984 article, McDowell questioned the credibility of *Vengeance: The True Story of an Israeli Counter-Terrorist Team* by George Jonas, published by Simon & Schuster. After reviewing the evidence against the credibility of the two books, McDowell wondered, "What are the responsibilities of book publishers in a democratic society for maintaining standards of evidence, proof, and disclosure in the books they publish?"

Publishers have occasionally withdrawn books from the market, at least temporarily, when they get caught out. That happened to *Poor Little Rich Girl*, a biography of Woolworth heiress Barbara Hutton written by C. David Heymann and published by Random House in 1983.

Like Kitty Kelley, Heymann had written previous biographies that were suspect in some of their specifics. Like Kelley in her Reagan book, Heymann trumpeted his extensive research on Hutton. Like Simon & Schuster, Random House thought it had a bestseller on its list.

Then Random House received a call from a lawyer representing a Beverly Hills physician mentioned in the book as having overmedicated Hutton in 1943. The lawyer presented proof that his client had been only fourteen years old in 1943. Random House executives began to do the kind of checking nobody had insisted upon before publication. That checking led to the book's recall.

Publisher Lyle Stuart bought the discredited manuscript, reworked it, and got it back into stores. Heymann's only quasi-admission of inaccuracy appeared in a disingenuous footnote on page 193.

Instead of shunning Heymann, the book world embraced him. Lyle Stuart signed him up for a new biography of Jackie Onassis, just as Stuart had signed Kitty Kelley to write about the same subject the previous decade. In 1989, Heymann's *A Woman Named Jackie* shot to the top of the bestseller list, despite questions about accuracy.

Probably the most searing indictment came from *Miami Herald* reporter Mike Wilson, who wrote, in part:

The two-pound, twelve-ounce book bulges with steamy new stories about the Kennedys.... But much in the book is not new. And much, Heymann's sources are saying, is not true. Heymann, whose last book was recalled by Random House because of a serious error, defended *A Woman Named Jackie* in a 45-minute phone interview with *The Miami Herald*, saying he had most of the interviews on tape. Then, refusing to answer any more questions, he hung up. Heymann's publicist, Sandra Bodner, said later that the *Herald* is 'attacking the author's credibility on really peripheral issues.' She said that, unless someone sues him, Heymann will not play his tapes for the *Herald* or anyone else.

Wilson's investigation of Heymann's book yielded convincing evidence that the author had wrenched a key direct quotation out of context, thereby altering its meaning. Furthermore, Wilson demonstrated that Heymann had

borrowed heavily from previous books without adequately crediting their authors.

Several of Wilson's sources questioned whether Heymann had even interviewed some of the people he said he had, including people who died before publication. Heymann insisted he had conducted the interviews, but, he said, he had not taped some of the particular ones at issue. His chapter notes were of little help — like Kelley's, they looked extensive at first glance, but some turned out to be vague and unverifiable upon closer study.

Neither Heymann nor his publicist nor his publisher produced new evidence to validate the book's accuracy. Yet the book stayed in stores and on library shelves. Signet, an imprint of New American Library which in turn is part of Penguin Books USA, published the book in mass market paperback without disclaimers.

The annals of contemporary trade publishing are filled



The problem with memoirs and other tell-all tales

Almost no serious nonfiction work is without merit for future researchers, especially journalists and historians. But when a researcher discovers a documentable error (a misspelled name, a wrong date, a sequence of events that could not have happened), how is he to know what portions to trust and what portions to distrust without a great deal of further checking?

Certain categories of books are especially troublesome — autobiographies and memoirs, for example. Most contain little or no documentation. Even if a reader were to check the facts, how is an average reader to know what is omitted? I learned about this the hard way while researching the first independent biography of industrialist-philanthropist-citizen-diplomat Armand Hammer. It took me about a year to fact-check his 1932 memoir, his 1987 autobiography, his 1975 commissioned biography, and his 1985 authorized picture book. It took me several more years to discover which significant episodes he had omitted, and there may well be others of which I am unaware.

John P. Roche, a Kennedy and Johnson administration insider, once tried to evaluate the accuracy of the memoirs from that era. "I know what I thought was happening, what others on the staff thought was happening, what the press thought was happening. But I cannot fully document what happened. And I have seen enough highly classified documents to know that what most of the observers thought was happening was at best half-right, at worst dead wrong," Roche wrote in *The New York Times Magazine* a score of years ago. After providing examples to support that assertion, he concluded, "So, farewell to instant history and God help the poor souls who try to put the jigsaw puzzle together."

with similar cases. Among the more notable are:

◆ *Katharine the Great: Katharine Graham and The Washington Post* by Deborah Davis, published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich in 1979. Davis alleged that *Washington Post* editor Benjamin Bradlee had collaborated with the Central Intelligence Agency and that Richard Ober, a CIA official, had acted as Deep Throat.

Davis had undeniably turned up some valuable new information about her subject. But some reviewers found the book poorly documented, and the absence of end notes certainly did not help Davis's credibility. After publication, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich received a letter from Bradlee pointing out thirty-nine alleged inaccuracies. Davis conceded some mistakes, while downplaying their significance to the overall theme. Subjects of books complain about inaccuracies all the time, of course; such complaints must be treated skeptically — because of the subjects' self-interest

— and yet seriously. This time, the publisher decided that Bradlee's list contained enough validity to call the whole project into question.

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich disavowed the book and shredded the remaining copies. It rose from the ashes eight years later, when National Press Inc. published what was billed as a "second edition." Nowhere did Davis or the publisher reveal what had happened to the first edition.

◆ *The Underground Empire: Where Crime and Governments Embrace* by James Mills, published by Doubleday in 1986. This 1,165-page blockbuster received lots of attention, mostly favorable, upon publication. Mills, touted by Doubleday as having "won a reputation as one of America's most respected journalists," had written for *Life* magazine. His books included fiction and nonfiction.

To a discerning reader, there were immediate warning signs that *The Underground Empire* might contain elements of fiction. The book lacked footnotes, end notes, a bibliography, and an index. Such omissions make fact-checking nearly impossible, and thus can be used by authors and publishers to evade responsibility. Those signs, among others, made Jack Miles and David Johnston suspicious. Miles was the book editor at the *Los Angeles Times*; Johnston was one of the paper's investigative reporters.

Johnston's eventual page-one story said that "forty-three people involved with events described in the book have told the *Times* that what Mills wrote about those events is untrue. Four people named or identified in the book say that Mills twisted their innocent and normal actions to make it appear that they are criminals or knowingly do business with major drug traffickers. All four said they would have explained their side if Mills had given them a chance."

After listening to those sources and checking the book page by page as thoroughly as he could, Johnston concluded that "government records, court papers, newspaper clippings, and other documents directly contradict numerous ... facts covering scores of pages throughout the book that are crucial to Mills' stated premise."

Mills and Doubleday defended the book's accuracy, without providing any proof. But, as Johnston wrote, Mills acknowledged "that he made no attempt to interview many people he writes about negatively. He said that because government agents were the sources of most of the allegations of criminal activity, he was under no journalistic obligation to let the suspects and others tell their side of the story."

Johnston was not the only critic. Law professor Alan Dershowitz, writing in *The New York Review of Books*, cited example after example showing why he found Mills's work nearly worthless as a guide to reality. The Federal Bureau of Investigation wrote to Doubleday, detailing errors. Doubleday did not respond.

This seeming indifference by a major publisher to well-documented charges of inaccuracy infuriated *Times* book editor Miles. In a column, he asked rhetorically, "Aren't there errors in any book? Couldn't a smart and determined reporter find flaws almost anywhere? Does it matter that the credibility of a given book is not total? Yes, there are errors of detail in every book. But no, there are

er when all the precincts have reported. As for me, I'm going to write it as I saw it — but with a candid admission that any resemblance to events as they in fact occurred may be coincidental."

There have been at least twenty insider memoirs of the Reagan administration; they contradict each other at the turn of each page. Yet, read in isolation, any one of those books might seem accurate. It is often necessary to read one after the other (a task almost nobody performs) before it becomes plain that something is rotten in publishers' row.

Another troublesome category is first-person books about espionage. In researching this article, I examined a dozen highly publicized books, all allegedly true, about the CIA, the KGB, and other intelligence services. I found compelling evidence that some of the biggest-selling, most important espionage books contain major, multiple errors amidst their pearls of fact. I found evidence of inaccuracy nearly as distressing while researching espionage books written by journalists and academics. A number of those belong to a subcategory of espionage — books about the John F. Kennedy assassination.

If authors and publishers can't guarantee accuracy before publishing, perhaps they should consider using the backdoor approach taken by the publisher of David Rorvik's *In His Image: The Cloning of a Man*. The publisher, J.B. Lippincott, provided readers with a warning that concluded: "The account that follows is an astonishing one. The author assures us it is true. We do not know. We believe simply that he has written a book which will stimulate interest and debate on issues of the utmost significance for our immediate future."

S. W.

not errors of this magnitude. And no, the smartest, most determined reporter would not get far against a carefully researched book.... *The Underground Empire* ... has debased the intellectual currency of its publisher. As with disinformation in the political arena, so with this example of public discourse — Mills's distortions and errors make it harder to take future Doubleday books at face value."

The *Los Angeles Times* exposé had little impact. Dell published *The Underground Empire* in paperback; reviewers of the paperback edition praised it, perhaps unaware of the Johnston-Miles debunking.

Often when books on the same topic appear more or less simultaneously, they are reviewed together. Inevitably, the conscientious reviewer, feeling compelled to compare and contrast, discovers passages in one book that contradict passages in the other. It happens even when both authors are respected researchers. A recent example involves two generally well-researched accounts of Manuel Noriega's rise and fall in Panama: *Our Man in Panama* by John Dinges, published by Random House, and *Divorcing the Dictator* by Frederick Kempe, published by Putnam. Reviewing the books together in *The Washington Post*, Miami Herald reporter Jeff Leen (whose expertise is based partly on research conducted for *Kings of Cocaine*, of which he was a co-author) commented:

Although Kempe out-reports Dinges, he's also given to making snap judgments in the face of scant facts. His most vivid scenes are often the products of unnamed sources. Time after time, he makes small errors. He estimates the cost of a cartel cocaine lab in Panama at \$1 billion — Dinges' \$500,000 is much closer to reality. He convicts a cartel boss in Tampa — it was Jacksonville. He has cartel drug flights overflying Cuba very soon after 1982 — the evidence shows it was five years later. He has DEA agents unaware that the cartel bosses were in Panama in 1984 — in fact, the DEA was running an informant who was meeting with those bosses personally.... In many unintended ways, these books illustrate how fragile our knowledge is of these events. The authors conflict on an amazing number of details, small and large. The disagreements range from the trivial (Noriega's favorite liquor — Old Crow or John Walker Black Label?) to the significant (Dinges says Noriega's father acknowledged paternity, Kempe says he did not) to the crucial ([source José] Blandón's credibility, the cartel's connections to Noriega).

Other cases in point: the multiple books on how Elvis Presley, Marilyn Monroe, Sylvia Plath, Pablo Picasso, and John Lennon lived and died contradict each other wildly.

B CAUSES AND SOLUTIONS

Book publishing is a strange business indeed. Most editors are educated people who presumably depend on books for much of their own knowledge. Yet they do virtually nothing meaningful to promote accurate knowledge for their house's customers.

Why is that? Publishers do not expect authors to be perfect spellers or grammarians; copy editors make hundreds, even thousands of alterations in a typical manuscript. Publishers do not expect authors to be omniscient about libel and privacy; in-house publishing lawyers or outside

counsel fire off multiple queries at the manuscript stage. But most publishers seem willing to assume that authors are somehow pillars of diligence and wisdom when it comes to finding facts, evaluating information, and drawing conclusions. The contractual burden for accuracy is by tradition primarily the author's. Yet authors are frequently unequipped to get everything right — because of poorly developed research skills, because of time and money pressures, because of laziness.

Some authors would welcome fact-checking assistance from their publishers; a few beg for it. The absence of a safety net is especially scary for authors who also write for magazines at which fact-checking is a tradition. *The New Yorker's* fact-checking operation is perhaps best-known to non-journalists, but fact-checkers at numerous other magazines are in the same league. They regularly catch errors. Everybody benefits — author, magazine publisher, and readers.

Kitty Kelley knows this. Seven years ago, during the controversy over the accuracy of a different biography by a different author, *Publishers Weekly* quoted Kelley as saying, "I take full responsibility for what I write, but when publishers have vast investments in writers, they should do all they can to help the book. They have an obligation to at least make an effort to fact-check."

Trade publishers do have alternatives to the current situation. They could pay in-house or outside researchers to request documentation from the author, then judge its worthiness. At the very least, they could pay for a spot check, then decide whether a full-scale review is necessary. (Models already exist in university presses, which traditionally send manuscripts to two or more outside readers knowledgeable in the subject area, paying those readers a stipend for their documented opinion.)

Reviewers, for their part, can be doing something, too. If a book lacks end notes, a bibliography, or an index, the reviewer should take the publisher to task. Newspapers, magazines, and broadcast outlets that use book reviews ought to increase their compensation so that reviewers can afford to take the time required to check accuracy.

Theodore Draper is living proof that it can be done. An independent journalist/historian, Draper is an assiduous checker of other authors' facts, convincingly exposing their transgressions in such publications as *The New York Review of Books*, *The New Republic*, *The New York Times Book Review*, and *Dissent*. Draper understands the special status books hold in the minds of readers, in the institutional memory of the nation: "A newspaper can report one thing one day and revise or revoke the report the next day; a book makes a promise of much longer duration and far greater authority. The scale and presentation make a vital difference."

In book publishing houses, accuracy is supposedly everybody's responsibility, but we all know what usually happens when a task is "everybody's responsibility" — ultimately, it becomes nobody's responsibility. As a result, the saying "You could look it up" doesn't always hold true, since the book you look it up in is not necessarily the final word. ♦

RSI

has become the nation's leading work-related illness. How are reporters and editors coping with it?

BY DIANA HEMBREE AND RICARDO SANDOVAL

◆ **1988:** A young reporter arrives for her first day of work at the Concord, New Hampshire, *Monitor*. In the ensuing weeks, she finds that the newsroom increasingly resembles a combat zone: several reporters on the small staff have their arms wrapped in Ace bandages or held stiff by plastic braces. At times, some move about with their arms held out like sleepwalkers; others dash to the restroom periodically for warm-water wrist massages. What is going on around here? the reporter asks herself.

◆ **1990:** During a long staff meeting at the *San Jose Mercury News* in northern California, a number of reporters fiddle with the laces of their wrist braces or annoy colleagues with the "zip, pop ... zip, pop" of Velcro snaps. Missing is one veteran reporter who has recently undergone neck surgery — an extreme remedy that one newsroom executive considers the result of years of typing notes with the phone receiver tucked behind shoulder and ear.

◆ **1991:** Reporters at the *Los Angeles Times* saddle up for a "chair derby" — a noisy free-for-all in which normally

serious journalists test-drive ergonomically correct chairs and other equipment. Nearby, several colleagues play with pneumatic height-adjustment buttons like kids who have just discovered a car's power windows.

These are snapshots of life in today's newsrooms — workplaces in which one finds increasing numbers of employees who suffer from disabling hand, arm, neck, and shoulder disorders collectively known as Repetitive Strain Injury, or RSI (see "A Newsroom Hazard Called RSI," CJR, January/February 1987). Since 1987, RSI has ranked as the country's leading occupational illness. Two years ago the Department of Labor estimated that the number of cases of disorders associated with repeated trauma had climbed to 146,000 — six times higher than the 1980 figure.

No one knows for certain how many of the afflicted are journalists, but some figures provide at least a rough outline of the extent of the problem. David J. Eisen, director of research and information for The Newspaper Guild, says that the guild has logged nearly 3,000 cases of RSI among employees in the Canadian and U.S. news industries, a figure he believes represents only a fraction of the total. Citing the need for more surveys, Eisen says, "RSI is like rice in a kettle of soup. It doesn't come

to the surface until you've stirred the pot."

Eisen's claim that RSI is underreported is backed up by a study by the California Department of Health Services, which found that in California's high-tech Santa Clara County state occupational safety and health officials had reported seventy-one cases of carpal tunnel syndrome in 1987 — the same year that health-care providers there reported treating nearly 4,000 cases of the same work-related form of RSI. Ironically, new policies that some newspapers have adopted to prevent RSI may discourage journalists from reporting their disorders.

Consider the example of the *San Francisco Examiner*, where a full 60 percent of the editorial and clerical staff responding to a guild survey reported symptoms of RSI. Early this year the paper decided that several employees whose doctors had determined they should work only part-time would be sent home on disability, which pays roughly one-third of a person's salary. One disgruntled editor said in a recent interview, "I have RSI and I don't know anyone [around here] who doesn't, but I'm certainly not going to tell management about it now. To me, the policy means that if they cripple you they can just throw you away." (The *Examiner*

Diana Hembree is news editor and Ricardo Sandoval is an associate of the San Francisco-based Center for Investigative Reporting, where several employees have recently developed symptoms of RSI.

says it has no written RSI policy and instead evaluates employees with the disorder on a case-by-case basis. But *Examiner* reporter Carol Ann Lucas says, "The implied policy has had a hell of a chilling effect on people around here. Several people have told me they are afraid to report their problems for fear that they'll be targets of future layoffs."

While underreporting of injuries remains a problem when attempting to determine just how widespread RSI is in the newspaper industry, the statistics at some major dailies are startling. At *Newsday*, 192 out of 812 editorial employees have filed workers compensation claims for RSI; at the *Los Angeles Times*, 317 of the newsroom's

1,200 employees suffer from the affliction. Meanwhile, The Associated Press, *Newsday*, Reuters, and *The Fresno Bee*, among others, have each had dozens of employees who suffer from RSI, some of whom have had to undergo surgery for nerve damage in the wrist.

With RSI on the rise, newspaper executives and medical employees who previously tended to dismiss sufferers' complaints as imaginary or neurotic are now scrambling to take preventive measures and remedial action. Noel Greenwood, senior editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, says that since 1986 the paper has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on RSI treatment and prevention. He recalls that "where we had attitude problems [in the mid-80s] was in

our medical department. People being afflicted by this were some of our best people. Yet our medical staff back then thought it was a scam. One even called it 'mass hysteria.' But no one thinks that now. The problem is real, and it's in every newspaper's interest to deal with it now."

Other newspapers, plagued by lost workdays, mounting disability payments, and newly disabled employees, are resorting to a variety of measures. For most, the initial defense against RSI has been educating employees about posture, rest breaks, and symptoms, and replacing too-high desks and early-model PCs with ergonomically sound equipment, including adjustable keyboards and chairs and hands-free

THE COMMON DENOMINATOR IS PAIN

In his office in downtown San Francisco, hand surgeon Robert Markison sees dozens of hands every day, and most of them aren't working the way they're supposed to — often as a result of keyboard injuries. A self-described computer fan, Markison ticks off the basic causes of RSI among computer users: one, the muscles and tendons become strained from holding the arms in a stationary position over a flat keyboard for hours. Two, repeating nearly identical keystrokes at a high rate of speed tens of thousands of times a day can cause the tendons to become irritated as they slide over bone and tissue, resulting in painful inflammation or swelling that can lead to nerve damage.

"You've got a regular superhighway of tendons in the wrist — nine in company with the median nerve, each wrapped in its own lubricating envelope," Markison explains, tapping the underside of a reporter's hand. "They're all in an unyielding fiber bone tunnel that won't open up for anybody. If, with repetitive motion, one of the envelopes swells even minimally, then the nerve can get mashed. It's as if nine people in overcoats were all trying to rush through a doorway at the same time: somebody's going to get hurt."

And, if one is hurt, the pain can last a long time. Says Robert A. Jones, a columnist for the *Los Angeles Times* who first felt pain in his arms and hands in 1985, "The pattern we've seen — at least here at the *Times* — is that when you're first injured, the pain is very severe, and you're in a downward spiral. Then it bottoms out. You get better, enough to continue on the job, but then you get into these cycles of severe pain followed by getting better again." Jones, who says he has experienced often-agonizing, chronic pain again since July 1990, concludes, "It is really frustrating. Everything in your life is affected by it. It threatens everything you do. You can't believe how depressed people have gotten over this around here."

Stress, tension, and poorly designed chairs and workstations, along with caffeine and cigarettes, which restrict small blood-vessel circulation, all exacerbate the problem. But no one knows exactly why some people develop RSI and others don't. Says Wendy Burnett, director of the New York Hand Surgery and Rehabilitation Center, which lists many reporters from the city's papers and wire services among its clients, "There is no common denominator with RSI, except pain."

D.H. and R.S.



CJR/Harvey Wang

HANDS-ON HEALING:
Wendy Burnett, director of the New York Hand Surgery and Rehabilitation Center, examines the hands of one of the many reporters who seek help at the center.

phones. The American Newspaper Publishers Association, for its part, will send ergonomists — workplace design specialists — to member papers on request for a fee.

However, user-friendly equipment is not cheap. The *Los Angeles Times* and *Newsday* in New York have each spent more than \$1.2 million retrofitting workstations, and the *Times* has created, at a cost of \$15,000, a widely distributed documentary on RSI. *Newsday* has even brought in a novel, voice-activated VDT — which cost \$9,000 — that has given one severely afflicted reporter a new lease on her career (see sidebar, page 44); two more are on order.

While RSI-afflicted reporters at *Newsday* are impressed by the new device, some say that other ergonomic improvements are "mostly for show" and are not enough to prevent pain and muscle spasms. Editors and other managers at the paper, however, are confident that cutting down on time spent in front of VDT screens, combined with state-of-the-art workstations, will slow the spread of the malady.

"I would never suggest that we have pleased all the people. But the frustration [caused by new cases of RSI] is shared by everyone," says Stu Levin, manager of occupational risk and workers compensation at *Newsday*. "An RSI problem is the last thing this company wants. It makes all the sense in the world for *Newsday* to want to make this problem go away. All of our efforts are geared toward getting a handle on the problem."

Levin's defense of *Newsday*'s policy on RSI is similar to that of some other newspaper executives. "Look, this is not the best time to be asking for hundreds of thousands of dollars for new equipment," says John Epperheimer, who until recently was chairman of a newsroom ergonomics task force at the *San Jose Mercury News*, where at last count 15 percent of the paper's newsroom staff were afflicted with RSI. "Yet the publisher took the request to [Knight-Ridder] management and fought for it." The new equipment, together with recommended breaks, has led to a drop in reported injuries, he says.

Expensive equipment alone, however, is no silver bullet against RSI. At Reuters, for example, where some 30

At some news organizations, journalists feel that an 'overwork' ethic contributes to stress and the problem of RSI

out of 150 reporters are afflicted with RSI ailments, some reporters contend that the relentless work pace of the wire service significantly contributes to their problems. Andrew Nibley, whose title at the wire service is editor America, says that, to lighten the load on the financial news desk, where the problem has been particularly severe, he has issued an "edict," cutting down on the length of stories.

At smaller news organizations, which are frequently understaffed and where editors often lack the authority to increase newsroom staff, management is more likely to take a hard-line attitude toward reporters with RSI. Some editors are sympathetic — Pat Baden, formerly of the *Roanoke Times* and *World News*, who developed severe tendonitis in 1989, found her employers "extremely supportive" — but many reporters at other papers say they are being pressured to work despite increasing pain.

Constance Hale, who developed carpal tunnel syndrome and severe tendonitis at the small Gilroy, California, *Dispatch*, criticizes "the boot-camp mentality typical of the small paper — the idea that this is a training ground and you should work nine or ten or twelve hours a day." Hale, who points out that three of the paper's five metro reporters recently developed RSI (she was one of the three), attributes this in part to ergonomic problems. She says that a too-high keyboard made typing

painful, but that, despite repeated requests for a better chair and a phone headset, she was not given them. "If a small paper can't afford new equipment in the middle of a recession, I can understand that and respect it," she says. "But how about cutting us down to one story a day? It doesn't make sense to lose good reporters by treating them as if they're totally dispensable."

Since Hale left the paper, the *Dispatch* has installed improved equipment — hand-me-downs from other papers in the McClatchy chain — and has begun educating reporters on proper ergonomics, with brochures and seminars. The paper has found it more difficult to deal with the work load, however. "At a small paper, you work harder and you write more stories than at larger papers. I don't know how to get around that," says Mark Derry, executive editor of the *Dispatch*.

At some small newspapers, journalists have discovered that developing the affliction can cost them their job. That is what happened to Deborah Tager, a well-liked features editor at the Concord, New Hampshire, *Monitor*, who was fired in 1989 after developing tendonitis and taking two successive leaves of absence.

The dismissal led to a series of emotional organizing meetings in staffers' homes. A letter of protest was drafted and signed by about twenty members of the staff. "Everyone was shocked. They all felt as if [the firing] could have happened to them," says one reporter.

Asked about Tager's firing, *Monitor* editor Mike Pride says, "We waited for some months [while Tager was out on leave], but we didn't know when she would come back. Her doctors couldn't

give us that information, and finally we had to say, 'Listen, we've got to fill that job.' I know the staff was upset about it, but we couldn't keep loading the work on to other people."

Pride also says he was "dumbfounded" by the incidence of RSI at the *Monitor*. "We had worked in the same newsroom with the same equipment for ten years and not had a single complaint." As a small newspaper, he says, the *Monitor* didn't have the flexibility

to leave positions open indefinitely, "but we did develop a policy with the staff's help that gave an employee [with RSI] who left the first crack at any job they were qualified for within a year of being terminated."

Most of those interviewed said that they liked and respected their editors, but that an "overwork" ethic pervaded the workplace and contributed to stress and the problem of RSI. Some also said that they felt angry, even betrayed, by

what they described as management's "dismissive" and "macho" attitude toward RSI. "There was a definite sense that if you complained, you were seen as someone who 'couldn't handle it,' as a wimp," says former *Monitor* copy editor Diane Loiselle. Another reporter recalls that, while working on a long series, she experienced "terrible stabbing pains" in her hands and told her editor, "My hands are really hurting; I'm not sure I'll be able to do it." His

THE LADY AND THE DRAGON

Some of the country's most innovative steps to fight RSI have been taken at *Newsday*, a Times Mirror newspaper based on New York's Long Island. Employees there talk about management's poor performance on RSI in the early days, but also describe a much-improved atmosphere now that "the people who were trying to save money by denying claims are no longer in charge of the problem," as one reporter put it. Today, some say, *Newsday* is trying almost everything to combat RSI. Worried editors even took the unpopular step of shutting down the newsroom's computerized message system, which has forced reporters and editors to push away from their terminals and walk around inside the building. "We're learning how to talk to each other again, just like we did in the old days," says *Newsday* reporter Susan Harrigan.

Harrigan, a financial reporter with an MBA and twenty years of reporting behind her, including jobs at *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Miami Herald*, now does her reporting on a new voice-activated computer. Developed by Dragon Systems of Newton, Massachusetts, it is called The DragonDictate. "If it weren't for the Dragon, I wouldn't be here," says Harrigan. "[With RSI] I was suddenly completely silenced for seven months. So when I wrote my first short note on the Dragon, it was absolutely exhilarating. It took me two hours to compose my first paragraph, but to have a voice again, even in a small way — it was a miracle."

Since Harrigan is too disabled to type at all, the Dragon was Harrigan's only option to return to work after being crippled by RSI in April 1989. The pain in her hands was so severe, she recalls, that she couldn't even hold a subway token, and had to have strings attached to drawers and closets at home so she could pull them open with her teeth. "Also, I couldn't open doors," she says, "so I'd have to stand in front of doors and ask someone to open them for me."

Sitting at a desk that she compares to a NASA control center and using two different headphones and a tape recorder, Harrigan dictates her stories to the Dragon — an exhausting and nerve-wracking process often interrupted by the computer's numerous quirks. "If someone laughs or yawns nearby, the Dragon will print gibberish — something like 'many-many-many, little-little-little!' — which seems to be its stress reaction. And like training a puppy, you can't let it get away with that, because it is quickly building all that gibberish into your voice program. The other day someone burped from three desks away and it threw up a menu of possible commands on



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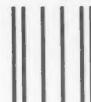
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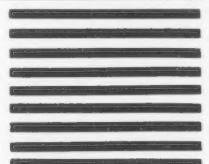
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reply, she says, was, "Well, we'll have to have it by tomorrow."

Pride says that the workload at the *Monitor* is not very different from that of any other paper. And he denies the charge that the paper was unsympathetic to RSI-afflicted employees. "I know it's difficult to speak up and say, 'I'm sick' or 'I'm hurt,' but when people said that, we listened and worked with them. I feel really badly about all the people who've been hurt by this."

As part of the *Monitor's* campaign against RSI, he says, three years ago the paper started installing new chairs and fully adjustable keyboards to replace the too-high tables, hired an occupational health specialist to check over workstation ergonomics and give advice on exercises, and distributed free headsets to those who wanted them. Only one employee has developed a serious case of RSI since that time, so Pride feels hopeful the program is working. "But

no one is pretending to think that just because the problem has abated it won't come up again."

The twin questions of who is responsible for causing RSI and who will pay for its effects on a person's health and career and income are increasingly the subject of litigation. More than twenty New York wire service and newspaper employees, including reporters at *American Banker*, *Newsday*, and *The*

CJR/Harvey Wang



VOICE-ACTIVATED VDT:

Too crippled to type, Newsday reporter Susan Harrigan, her wrists resting on ice packs, uses a computer that translates spoken words into text. "I feel like a concert pianist limited to playing 'Chopsticks,'" she says.

the screen." She laughs ruefully. "Of course, if I had been on deadline, it wouldn't have been very amusing."

Harrigan, who has a love-hate relationship with the amazing machine, says that even getting into the program can be unnerving. "I turn on the computer by saying, 'Wake up!' and when a source calls, I de-activate the voice mode by ordering it to go to sleep. Sometimes it doesn't 'hear' me quickly enough, so when I pick up the phone my sources hear me yelling, 'Go to sleep! GO TO SLEEP!'"

Spelling is another sticking point: "I sound like a radio operator in the DMZ zone — I'm using the international military alphabet — you know, using call letters like Hotel-Echo-Mike-Bravo-Romeo, etcetera. The other day I was trying to spell out 'unregulated,' because it had given me something ridiculous like 'matriculate.' And it wasn't taking my 'g,' just making little pitiful beeps and squeaks and blinking malevolently. I got so frustrated I finally threw something at it — something light, of course."

Such techno-glitches — and muscle spasms that make sitting impossible for more than four hours at a time, even with frequent breaks — lead Harrigan to warn other journalists that for all the Dragon's wonders it is not a panacea for RSI. "I am just tremendously appreciative to *Newsday* and the Dragon's inventor for making it possible for me to come back, very grateful, but so far I'm limited to writing about ten or eleven words a minute." She adds that she has been able to write only two short pieces in six months.

"It's hard to hear editors searching frantically for someone to write a big story on deadline, because I used to be that person," she says. "I was a productive journalist for twenty years, and now sometimes I feel like a concert pianist limited to playing 'Chopsticks' over and over. I feel a great sadness; I've lost an enormous part of myself and I haven't really gotten it back."

It's partly the thought of being a pioneer in the newsroom that helps Harrigan maintain her self-esteem, she says. "I feel like I'm helping blaze the way for other reporters disabled by RSI and other injuries," she says. "I see the Dragon as the Model T of voice-activated computers, and I like to think I'm helping to refine it. I love the thought of doing that. But as Americans we put so much faith in technology, and I want to caution people that so far the technology that has crippled so many of us hasn't really rescued us, either. It's far better to try to prevent RSI in the first place."

D.H. and R.S.

Village Voice, have sued VDT manufacturer Atex Inc., since renamed Electronic Pre-Press Systems, a subsidiary of Eastman Kodak. (Workers compensation laws prohibit employees from suing their employers.) They claim that the company knew or should have known of RSI hazards, and that it failed to warn users. The potentially expensive lawsuits — more than \$200 million in damages are being sought — are still in the pretrial stages, but their progress is being anxiously monitored by industry executives and computer manufacturers.

Newspaper executives are also anxiously watching VDT safety ordinances such as the one recently passed by San Francisco's Board of Supervisors over the vociferous objections of the business community. The new law requires all companies with fifteen or more employees to modify or buy a long list of adjustable equipment for its VDT workstations and to give employees alternative work for every two hours spent on a VDT. The bill was opposed by the *Examiner*, which in a December 19 editorial accused the county supervisors of wanting "to meddle in everything from the size of file cabinets to electroshock therapy."

Meanwhile, some newspapers and agencies are supplementing poor-paying workers compensation coverage with supplemental disability plans from private insurers, which can boost a reporter's income while he or she is on leave to a level approaching that of the reporter's normal salary.

In spite of these changes, and despite the widespread coverage of RSI in recent years, a few people in newspaper management remain unmoved, says *Newsday*'s Stu Levin. He speaks of executives at other papers "who call us and say we are bad managers for not managing a bunch of hysterical workers. It is amazing to hear those people make those statements. It is also amazing six months later when they call us back and ask for advice on how to deal with the problem." ♦

TRYING TO COLLECT

Insurers faced with a growing stack of RSI claims for diagnosed injuries have taken different approaches: some pay up promptly; others harass victims at home with intrusive questions or send reporters to a dizzying round of specialists for independent medical evaluations, often denying their claims afterwards. One early RSI victim, a New York reporter who today can't hold a telephone to her ear, says she and other sufferers "had to make spectacles of ourselves before we won. I paid thousands in bills out of my pocket and waited more than a year before being reimbursed. It's been frustrating."

Some newspaper managers are equally critical. "I'm not going to say all insurance companies are handling RSI poorly, but some companies are still contorting every case that smells like RSI," says Stu Levin, manager of occupational risk and workers compensation at *Newsday*.

Wendy Burnett, director of the New York Hand Surgery and Rehabilitation Center, says she has seen insurance companies "contorting claims in order not to pay. Many people end up in court over the claims, and in the meantime, care-givers like us don't get paid."

Reporters at the Concord, New Hampshire, *Monitor* single out Wausau Insurance Companies, of Wausau, Wisconsin, and Hanover Insurance Company, of Worcester, Massachusetts, as particularly hard-nosed. Over the past three years, the companies have contested or refused to pay workers compensation claims for RSI filed by at least four *Monitor* employees. In one case, insurance agents sent *Monitor* copy editor Diane Loiselle, diagnosed by a Boston occupational health special-

ist as having work-related tenosynovitis, to orthopedic surgeon Donald L. Cusson of Manchester, New Hampshire, for an independent medical examination. In a letter to insurance company lawyers dated April 12, 1989, he concluded that Loiselle must have "pretty much prompted" the occupational health specialist into writing a diagnosis of work-related injury.

Dr. Cusson added: "These cases appear to be totally subjective, chronic and neurotic in nature and not related to work...." After months of battling with Wausau and Hanover, Loiselle won an out-of-court settlement of \$7,500.

Keith Bateman of the Alliance of American Insurers denies that the industry is trying to quash RSI-related claims. "I've talked to claims people and they are surprised you'd say that. That is not what they are seeing." He acknowledges that the industry examines RSI and other job-related claims closely: "There are some questions of causal relations. Are they all due to workplace conditions, or the natural aging process?" He adds that "non-specific pains" would also come under scrutiny.

Although some insurers suggest that RSI symptoms are "subjective," recent medical studies refute that notion. In a study published in the respected British medical journal *The Lancet*, medical researchers in Australia describe a case-controlled study in which they took muscle biopsies of twenty-nine women with RSI and observed striking abnormalities in both muscle tissue and cells. These biological changes, they concluded, "cannot be accounted for by known psychological mechanisms."

D.H. and R.S.



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RESOURCES

FOLLOWING THE MONEY

BY STEVE WEINBERG

Last December *The Boston Globe* ran an editorial with the provocative headline WHY POLITICS \$TINK\$. Martin F. Nolan, political correspondent turned editorialist, opened the piece like this:

In 1986, when he ran for the U.S. Senate from Colorado, Timothy E. Wirth asked his campaign staff to keep track of how he spent his time. The answer shocked Wirth, even though he had been a member of the House for six terms. He spent 85 percent of his time raising money.

One point Nolan makes in POLITICS \$TINK\$ — that too many U.S. representatives and senators spend too much time hustling for election-campaign funds — is just part of the larger story of how profoundly money in politics corrupts. Almost always the press's role in covering this larger story is passive. A dramatic scandal involving the likes of Jim Wright, Tony Coelho, the Keating Five senators, or multiple members of the same state legislature (as in Arizona and South Carolina recently) falls into the reporters' laps; at that point, the media, aroused, set about pursuing the story to its sleazy denouement.

After the pack has done its job on this single story, however, its members seldom pause to consider that the problem may be systemic — that other politicians, subjected to the same financial pressures as the latest one to be publicly shamed, may have succumbed in a similar manner and accepted large sums of

Steve Weinberg, a CJR contributing editor, has written about money in politics for twenty-two years from Washington, D.C., Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri. He is editor of the bimonthly Journal of Investigative Reporters and Editors, based at the University of Missouri School of Journalism in Columbia.

money in return for future favors. The rot is by no means limited to the legislative branch: money sometimes corrupts decision-making by executive-branch bureaucrats at all levels of government, and reaches into the court system as well.

While the pack goes its own reactive way, a handful of journalists has provided models of in-depth coverage, year in and year out. An example is the staff of the bimonthly *Common Cause Magazine*, created eleven years ago in Washington, D.C., to rake the muck of politics. Three recent titles are "Back-Pocket PACs: New Ways to Skirt the Law," by Peter Overby, and "The Brooklyn Bundler: A Lone Political Operative Masters the Art of Buying Entree in Washington" and "Money On the Line: Political Parties, Members of Congress, and Special Interests Are Spending Millions to Influence the Next Round of Gerrymandering," both by Viveca Novak. The staff of *National Journal*, a Washington, D.C.-based

CAMPAIN '92

weekly magazine, also regularly comes up with thoughtful and well-reported pieces about the impact of money on politics. After that, the pickings are pretty slim.

Granted, virtually every daily newspaper, some public affairs magazines, and some broadcast news operations do stories about campaign finance, mostly in congressional and presidential races as election day nears. Unfortunately, the overwhelming majority of those stories possess a disturbing sameness. Too often, the piece is pegged to and based solely on the most recent financial filings by the rival politicians' organizations. A typical story starts off like this:

Senator Slick Fox raised \$2 million during 1990 for his re-election campaign on the GOP ticket, according to the latest report filed by Fox's campaign at the Federal Election Commission. Fox's only declared challenger, Democrat Wiley Coyote, currently state treasurer, reported raising \$100,000, FEC reports indicate. Most political analysts give Coyote a poor chance of unseating Fox, who has served in Washington since 1968.

An exclusive diet of such stories

serves the audience poorly for a number of reasons:

• They fail to look at the "who" of income, never distinguishing among grass-roots giving by in-state individual contributors who can actually vote for the candidate and don't expect any favors; political action committees with roots in the state that seek access to or specific legislative favors from the candidate, or both; and out-of-state givers, including wealthy individuals with special-interest agendas, as well as selfishly motivated corporate, labor, single-issue, and ideological political action committees. Any time a candidate receives money from donors ineligible to vote in his or her jurisdiction, a journalist ought to be especially curious about what the donor is seeking. Talking to the people whose names appear on the contributors' lists almost always leads to a more informative story.

• They fail to dissect the incumbent's record on the floor of the legislature, in committee sessions, and in backrooms. That dissection must examine the public policy initiatives blocked by the incumbent, as well as those he pushed or at least supported. Unearthing such examples takes skill and diligence. For example, a manufacturers' political action committee might support an incumbent because of a job-safety bill that he bottled up in committee. Nowhere is it recorded for public consumption that the incumbent is responsible for the bill's demise. But the PAC's decision-makers know. Left in the dark are the assembly-line workers whose health and very lives may be jeopardized as a result of the incumbent's desire for a large contribution.

• They fail to examine spending. Income is significant, but so is outgo. How is the candidate spending the money? Who is receiving the largesse, and why? Interviewing the recipients of the candidate's expenditures should be de rigueur, but most journalists never do it. An enterprising reporter might discover that the candidate, ostensibly needy, is actually quite well off and is passing contributors' money along to an incumbent or challenger in a different district or state. Or the reporter might find that campaign contributions are being used to line the pockets of family members who own printing businesses,

political consulting firms, and the like. The possibilities for legally and morally questionable expenditures are virtually endless, yet journalists seldom explore this terrain.

They fail to provide historical perspective. How much money did the winning candidate raise and spend during the last few election cycles? How much did the loser raise and spend? Did they raise money differently this time around — and is their pattern of spending it noticeably different? Although every election cycle has its own dynamic, it is still possible to learn from recent history.

They never discuss the ethics of the system. A contribution or expenditure may well be legal, but is it ethical? Is it the way a responsible person in a policymaking position should act?

Coverage need not be so superficial so often. Journalists wanting to provide the best possible coverage of money in politics have a wealth of resources to consult. Among them are:

PAPER AND COMPUTER TRAILS

The Federal Election Commission is generally regarded as a toothless tiger when it comes to enforcing campaign law violations. The toothlessness is partly a lack of meaningful power conferred by Congress, partly a lack of will by some of the appointed commissioners. But the FEC is an easily accessible gold mine of raw data, thanks in large part to Kent Cooper, the agency's public disclosure chief. Many journalists say that Cooper is the best-informed, most helpful, tuned-in bureaucrat in their experience. The agency's address is 999 E Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20463, tel. (202) 376-3140 or (800) 424-9530.

FEC information comes from candidates (incumbents and challengers) for the U.S. House, Senate, and White House. It is computerized and accessible electronically or in hard copy at the FEC's public disclosure room, in U.S. House and Senate records offices, in state capitals, through the mail, or via a personal computer hooked to a modem. Journalists can request a variety of indexes listing, for example, contributions received by a federal candidate during a two-year election cycle, expen-

ditures by any federal candidate, all contributions by a specific individual or political action committee to one or more candidates, and contributions by every person listed in the same zip code area or same state.

The FEC publishes guides to its resources, all of them easy to understand. Probably the most comprehensive overview is titled "Combined Federal/State Disclosure Directory," showing where to locate information about campaign finance, personal finances of officeholders, lobbying and lobbyists, corporations, and election results.

Organizations have evolved to help journalists by organizing FEC data on computer, combined with information from ancillary sources, in new ways. Among them are the Center for Responsive Politics, 1320 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 857-0044 (Larry Makinson); the Campaign Research Center, 1010 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 710, Washington, D.C. 20005, (202) 347-5400 (Gary Schmitz); and the Missouri Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting, University of Missouri School of Journalism, Neff Hall, Columbia, Missouri, 65211, (314) 882-0684 (Elliot Jaspin).

CONGRESSIONAL LEADS

Journalists might also want to consult three U.S. Senate committees — rules and administration, ethics, and appropriations (particularly the appropriations subcommittee on general government) — plus the corollary House committees.

PEOPLE AND GROUPS

Ellen Miller, Center for Responsive Politics; the staff at *Common Cause Magazine* or its parent organization, 2030 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 833-1200; Public Citizen/Congress Watch, 215 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003, (202) 546-4996; and Charles Lewis, the Center for Public Integrity, 1910 K Street, N.W., Suite 802, Washington, D.C. 20006, (202) 223-0299. Those four groups are reform-minded but generally nonpartisan. Journalists can also consult sources within other think tanks and self-styled public interest groups, on university campuses, within the Democratic and Republican parties, as

well as individual lobbyists, individual political action committees, incumbent politicians and their current and former staff members, their challengers, and retired officeholders. The Center for Responsive Politics has published a list of key sources, called "Experts on Money and Politics." Similar lists may be found in various books. Probably the best is Congressional Quarterly's *Washington Information Directory*, especially Chapter 17.

SELECTED READINGS

Three classic works should be required reading: Louise Overacker's *Money in Elections*, published in 1932, which demonstrates how the U.S. political system has been corrupted by money; *Politics and Money: The New Road to Corruption*, published in 1983, by Elizabeth Drew, *The New Yorker's Washington correspondent*; and *Honest Graft: Big Money and the American Political Process*, published in 1988 (and updated in 1990), by Brooks Jackson, formerly of *The Wall Street Journal*, now a member of CNN's investigative unit.

Other useful books are: *PAC Power: Inside the World of Political Action Committees*, by Larry J. Sabato, a political science professor; *Wild Blue Yonder: Money, Politics, and the B-1 Bomber*, by journalist Nick Kotz; *The Best Congress Money Can Buy*, by Philip M. Stern, a journalist and philanthropist; and *Interest Group Politics* (third edition), a collection of academic essays edited by political scientists Allan J. Cigler and Burdett A. Loomis.

Many other books and monographs show up in "Selected Print Resources," available from the Center for Responsive Politics. Numerous books on investigative reporting contain examples of political corruption and offer step-by-step advice on how to ferret out stories. Among the best are *The Reporter's Handbook: An Investigator's Guide to Documents and Techniques* (second edition), edited by John Ullmann and Jan Colbert for Investigative Reporters and Editors Inc.; *Investigative Reporting* (second edition), by Peter Benjamin and David Anderson; *Investigative Reporting and Editing*, by Paul N. Williams; and *Investigative Reporting*, by Clark Mollenhoff. ♦

JUDGMENT CALL

How Far Down the Tobacco Road?

BY MIKE FITZGERALD
AND BRENT SHEARER

Rob Logan knew there might be conflict-of-interest questions when, in the summer of 1988, he took part in discussions with General Foods about a grant for the Science Journalism Center he directs at the University of Missouri, in Columbia. The journalism faculty at the school voted in November 1990 to accept the money, but not without some debate: Should a science journalism center take money from a food company? And from a food company owned by Philip Morris, the cigarette giant?

The grant was to be made under the name of Kraft General Foods (Philip Morris acquired Kraft in late 1988 and merged it with General Foods into a single operating company). But early this year the parent company — to preempt charges of "subterfuge," Logan says — requested that the money be awarded under its corporate name, Philip Morris Companies, Inc. The name change complicated things. Because of the new stipulation, the faculty would have to vote again on whether to approve it.

The \$150,000 grant would not only bolster the science center, which has had some funding disappointments recently; it would also launch a mid-

Mike Fitzgerald and Brent Shearer are graduate students at the University of Missouri's School of Journalism, in Columbia.

career program for science journalists who want to increase their understanding of statistics and risk assessment. Logan's idea was to bring in top science writers for talks on environmental and health reporting and to distribute the videotaped discussions to interested press organizations.

For Logan, turning to a cigarette company to help fund a health-science project is not the stretch it might seem to some. He discounts the idea that Philip Morris was trying to buy a piece of the school's reputation. "From the very beginning they said they wanted this to be very low-profile, very high-minded," he says. "They believe that if journalists understood social statistics and epidemiology better, their industries would do much better in the long run."

Sheila Banks McKenzie, director of media affairs for Philip Morris USA, the company's domestic tobacco subsidiary, also dismisses the idea that the company was trying to buy good p.r. "We want more research on issues that have to do with our industry," she says. "We're simply offering resources to help train young people to do their jobs and be good journalists."

Some of the journalism school's faculty members welcomed the offer, as long as no strings were attached. But others argued that taking money from any potential newsmaker would compromise the credibility of the science center and of the entire journalism school. Another group contended that taking money from a cigarette maker was particularly wrongheaded.

Daryl Moen, who runs the journalism school's programs for working professionals, conceded that he was a little uncomfortable about taking money from a cigarette company; still, he was among those who wanted to accept the grant. "Every time a donor gives money, there's a reason," he says. "They want to be associated with something positive. The question to

me is: Can we preserve our integrity? And is it going to benefit journalism? If the science center can take the money and control the program and gather journalists together and they come out better reporters for that, it seems to me we've advanced the profession."

Other faculty members viewed the Philip Morris offer in a different light. Ed Lambeth, former associate dean of the Missouri graduate program, argued that "we should keep a good distance from having financial support for journalists from corporations they write about"



Ed Lambeth:
**"We should
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from having
financial
support for
journalists
from
corporations
they write
about"**

Logan concedes that in the end his own position was shaped by pragmatic rather than ethical considerations. In February, he says, while attending the American Association for the Advancement of Science's annual meeting in Washington, D.C., he spoke with nearly two dozen of the country's top science writers, including some of the center's own board members. All of them urged him to reject the money because of the harm it could inflict upon the center's credibility.

So in March, although he had spent more than two years negotiating for the money, Logan recommended against holding a scheduled faculty vote to accept or reject the offer. "Our job is to serve senior science writers and the science writing community in the United States," he says. "I know very well that if we were to lose those people, it wasn't worth doing it."

Still, Logan does not rule out approaching Philip Morris again. (According to a Philip Morris spokesman, the grant is "in limbo.") If the science center cannot attract funding, he says, it faces an uncertain future. One of its three full-time staff positions was eliminated this spring.

Although the journalism school is a state-supported institution, it depends heavily on corporate donations and will continue to do so in the wake of one of



Daryl Moen:
**"If the
science
center can
take the
money and
control the
program ...
it seems to
me we've
advanced the
profession"**

photos: Charlotte Schmid-Maybach

the tightest state budgets in memory. A list of the school's corporate donors, including IBM, Gannett, and Eastman Kodak, would field a Fortune 500 all-star team. Indeed, a big grant from Dow Chemical USA — a grant that also stirred faculty debate — helped launch the science journalism center in 1986.

The University of Missouri's journalism school is not the only one at which the idea of Philip Morris money has raised eyebrows. Last year, after alumni association officials suggested that Philip Morris was interested in funding



Rob Logan:
"Our job is
to serve
the science
writing
community.
If we were to
lose those
people, it
wasn't worth
doing it"

projects related to the First Amendment, Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism explored the possibility of such a grant. But Dean Joan Konner

says that although she wrote the company a letter, she dropped the idea after other alumni association members "alerted me to the sensitivity" of a Philip Morris grant and after faculty members she consulted advised her not to seek one.

Meanwhile, at Baruch College, a branch of the City University of New York, Philip Morris provided matching funds from 1985 to 1989 for *Dollars and Sense*, a student-produced magazine that covers business and social policy issues. Publisher Roslyn Bernstein, a Baruch journalism professor, was happy with Philip Morris as a funding source. "We ran any story we felt like running. There was no editorial intrusion," she says.

After the CUNY board of trustees voted to divest itself of its tobacco stocks in the late spring of 1990, Philip Morris did not renew its support for *Dollars and Sense* (the magazine continues to publish with outside grants from the Reuters Fund and RJR Nabisco Inc.). "All I know is that in June 1990 the funds didn't arrive," Bernstein says. "We never received any notification from Philip Morris about why."

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Writing for Publication

Clarkson N. Potter

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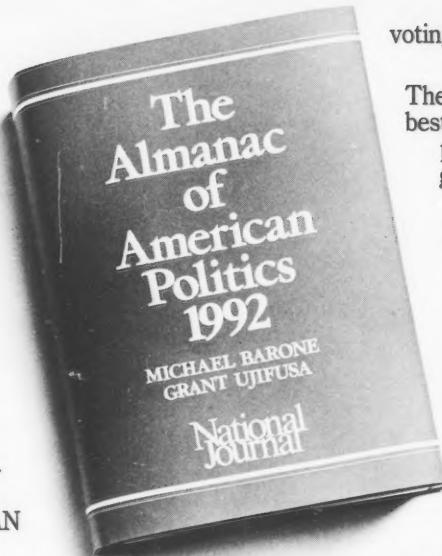
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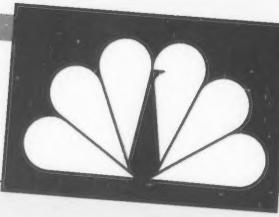
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DOCUMENT



Wed Apr 24 11:43 page 1

SLUG SHOW WRITER DATE TIMING
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To the staff:

Why did NBC News name the woman who says she was raped at the Kennedy compound in Florida over the Easter weekend? How was that decision made?

For years, the issue has been debated by journalists and feminists: should the names of rape victims or alleged rape victims be made public? Among journalists, there is no agreement; among feminists, there is no agreement.

At NBC, we debated the journalistic arguments.

Some background: I have been deeply interested in this subject for years, discussing it and debating it. Years ago, I concluded that journalistically it is usually right to name rape victims. Usually, but not always.

Here is my reasoning:

First, we are in the business of disseminating news, not suppressing it. Names and facts are news. They add credibility, they round out the story, they give the viewer or reader information he or she needs to understand issues, to make up his or her own mind about what's going on. So my prejudice is always toward telling the viewer all the germane facts that we know.

Second, producers and editors and news directors should make editorial decisions; editorial decisions should not be made in courtrooms, or legislatures, or briefing rooms -- or by persons involved in the news. That is why I oppose military censorship, legislative mandate, and the general belief that we should only print the names of rape victims who volunteer their names. In no other category of news do we give the newsmaker the option of being named. Those are decisions that should be made in newsrooms -- one way or another.

Third, by not naming rape victims we are part of a conspiracy of silence, and that silence is bad for viewers and readers. It reinforces the idea that somehow there is something shameful about being raped. Rape is a crime of violence, a horrible crime of violence. Rapists are horrible people; rape victims are not. One role of the press is to inform, and one way of informing is to destroy incorrect impressions and stereotypes.

Fourth, and finally, there is an issue of fairness. I heard no debate in our newsroom and heard of no debate in other newsrooms on whether we should name the suspect, William Smith. He has not been charged with anything. Yet we dragged his name and his reputation into this without thought, without regard to what might happen to him should he not be guilty -- indeed, should he not even be charged. Rapists are vile human beings; but a suspect isn't necessarily a rapist. Were we fair? Probably, yes, because he was thrust into the news, rightly or wrongly. But so was Patricia Bowman, and we should treat her the same way journalistically. We are reporters; we don't take sides, we don't pass judgment.

Those are the points made in our internal debates. At NBC News, I first raised the issue when the woman was raped in Central Park. We had one story on Nightly News, and after that I told some colleagues that if that were to become a continuing national story we should debate the question of naming the woman. As it turned out, it did not become a continuing national story, and we did not

NAMING THE VICTIM

This past April—following a woman's allegations that she had been raped by Senator Edward Kennedy's nephew William Kennedy Smith—NBC News broke ranks with a tradition honored by other mainstream news organizations by reporting the name of the alleged victim without her consent. The following day The New York Times published the woman's name, asserting that the NBC disclosure had already made her name public knowledge. These decisions set off a great deal of internal discussion at both organizations and in the press at large. In this memo to his staff, Michael Gartner, president of NBC News, justifies his decision.

Wed Apr 24 11:43 page 2

have the debate at that time.

Two weeks ago, I began debating in my own mind the issue of the Florida case. I joined in the debate with some colleagues from outside NBC News last week. On Monday of this week, I raised the issue with three colleagues within NBC News. We discussed it at some length. Should we do this, and if we did it how should we frame it?

On Tuesday, the discussions continued. They were passionate and spirited, but not mean-spirited. By the end of the day, the debate probably encompassed 30 persons, men and women of all views. There was no unanimity; if a vote had been taken, it probably would have been not to print the name. But I decided, for the reasons listed here, to air the name. The fact that her identity was known to many in her community was another factor -- but not a controlling one -- in my decision.

There were those -- including some involved in the preparation, production and presentation of the piece -- who disagreed intellectually. But no one asked to be removed from the story, and everyone did a thorough job. The story was clear and fair and accurate; it was not sensational, and -- for those who think it was done for ratings or the like -- it was not hyped or promoted. It was presented as just another very interesting story in a Nightly News broadcast that, that night, was full of especially compelling stories.

At 5:00pm, we did send an advisory to affiliates that we were naming the woman, for our Florida affiliates, especially, needed to be told in advance. In the time since, six of our 209 affiliates have complained to us about the decision; at least one, WBZ in Boston, bleeped out the woman's name and covered her picture. Several affiliates said we ran counter to their own policies, but just as we respect their views they respected ours and ran the story. Several other affiliates called to say they agreed with our decision. Most said nothing.

I am particularly proud of the process we went through in reaching our conclusion; in fact, the process was more important than the conclusion. There was vigorous and free debate about an issue of journalism; all sides were discussed. The story was shaped and reshaped as a result of that debate. When we ultimately decided to air the name, everyone involved at least understood the reasons, and everyone then did the usual first-rate work.

Our decision engendered a national debate. Much of the debate has been focused on the wrong issues, but much of it has been focused on the right issue: the crime of rape. The debate itself has raised the awareness of the horribleness of the crime, the innocence of victims, the vileness of rapists. That has been a beneficial side-effect.

Rape is rarely a national story. If another rape becomes a big story, we will have the same debate again. The position at NBC News is this: we will consider the naming of rape victims or alleged rape victims on a case-by-case basis.

BOOKS

THE BINGHAM SAGA

BY JAMES BOYLAN

There is a hint of farce lurking behind the otherwise somber content of the four relatively recent books on the Bingham family of Louisville. Not only did the four tread on each other's heels but the authors must have been thrown so close together that they could have formed a club. By consulting endnotes, it can be ascertained that the authors of book four, the Susan E. Tiffet/Alex S. Jones team, interviewed Barry Bingham, Jr., on January 13, 1986, and that Marie Brenner, author of book two, did the same four days later. The David Leon Chandler/Mary Voelz Chandler team, authors of book one, interviewed Barry Bingham, Sr., on January 27, 1986, three days after Brenner. The Chandlers and Brenner both interviewed Sallie Bingham on the same day, January 23, 1986. One sees the Chandlers leaving by the kitchen door as Brenner is ushered in at the front, or vice versa. And, of course, at the same time Sallie Bingham, a professional writer, was in a sense interviewing herself, for her memoir, book three, must already have been in gestation.

That there were writers buzzing around the Binghams early in 1986 was no coincidence. On January 9, Barry Bingham, Sr., had announced that the family's holdings — the two Louisville newspapers, its television and radio stations, and a few other subsidiaries — were for sale. The attraction for the writers, of course, was not the sale itself, but the publicized family dissension that had led to it — and behind that the lights and darks of the history of the

Binghams, a mingled yarn of sudden or mysterious death, with each generation mixing glittering success and dereliction, and finally an irresolvable struggle for dominance.

Book one, that of the Chandlers, was the first out, in January 1988. It would have appeared even earlier had not Barry Bingham, Sr., the head of the family, waged a determined legal battle to block it, for it reconstructed (falsely, he contended) the darkest episode of family history. He succeeded in persuading, or pressuring, the Macmillan Company to take it off the press but said he was too weary for another fight when Crown brought it out as *The Binghams of Louisville: The Dark History Behind One of America's Great Fortunes*.

The cause of the senior Bingham's consternation was the Chandlers' concentration on the death of his first stepmother, his father's second wife. Mary Lily Kenan Flagler happened to be the richest widow in America, having survived the magnate Henry Flagler, when she married Colonel Robert Worth Bingham, a member of a North Carolina family of aristocratic pretensions, in 1916. She died eight months later under

much-disputed circumstances — there were whispers of drug addiction, medical neglect, syphilis, poisoning — after having allocated a splinter, five million dollars, of her fortune to her husband. This pittance let him pay off his debts and, later, acquire the Louisville newspapers. In his 1986 biography of Henry Flagler, David Chandler had passed off Mary Lily's death as "an apparent heart attack," but that was then. The Chandlers' book on the Binghams two years later concluded that while her

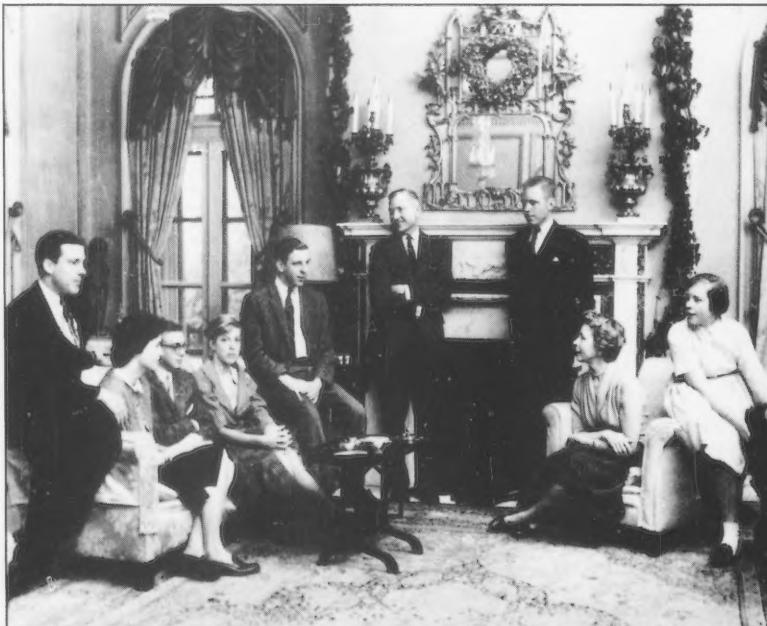
THE PATRIARCH: THE RISE AND FALL OF THE BINGHAM DYNASTY

BY SUSAN E. TIFFET AND ALEX S. JONES
SUMMIT BOOKS. 574 PP. \$24.95

death "may not be a 100 percent murder, it is certainly a 100 percent killing." But for the Chandlers, as for the other writers, the possible key to the mystery, the report from a secret autopsy, remains locked in the archives of her family.

Book two was Marie Brenner's *House of Dreams: The Bingham Family of Louisville* (Random House), published a few months later. Where the Chandlers scarcely glanced at recent and current Binghams in their concen-

BEFORE THE FALL: *The Binghams at Christmas, 1959. From left to right: Worth, Joan, Whitney, Sallie, Jonathan, Barry, Sr., Barry, Jr., Mary, and Eleanor*



James Boylan is a contributing editor of CJR.

tration on the scandal, Brenner wrote an almost novelistic *Scenes from a Marriage*, on the union, lasting fifty-seven years, of Barry Bingham, Sr., and Mary Caperton. She drew on hundreds of letters they had written to each other over the decades, all available for scrutiny in the Schlesinger Library at Radcliffe. It was a marriage of durability, mutual affection, and considerable glamour that was able to survive such severe blows as the accidental deaths of two of their three sons. It also may have been strong enough, she suggests, to crush everything in its path.

Barry Bingham, Sr., did not live to see book three, the work of their renegade daughter, Sallie, whose conflicts with her surviving brother and parents precipitated the dissolution of the family empire. *Passion and Prejudice: A Family Memoir* (Knopf), if it had stood alone rather than in the thicket of books about family discord, might have been regarded merely as a somewhat embittered reminiscence. Inevitably, it was regarded as another blow against the empire, consistent with Sallie's support of the Chandlers in their dispute with her father. To its credit, *Passion and Prejudice* does not fish much in the troubled waters of Mary Lily's death. Besides its review of family history, it contains the one account so far of the breakup by a participant, particularly telling in its recounting of the critical episodes when Sallie's brother, Barry Bingham, Jr., editor and publisher of the newspapers, forced her (with her mother, sister, and sister-in-law, for consistency) off the board of directors — the point, the chroniclers agree, when the damage became irreparable.

Book four, appearing this spring, is Tiff/Jones, which, Brenner complained mildly in her book, was destined to be the "authorized" account. Like Brenner, Tiff and Jones rely on hundreds of hours of interviews; they may have had slightly, but only slightly, better access than Brenner, who was initially held at arm's length. Their edge is in thoroughness, their use not only of the Barry-Mary Bingham correspondence but of every available archival resource, down to and including school records. They were stopped only by that autopsy report. Even so, they arrive at a well-argued conclusion about Mary Lily —

that she had died of cardiovascular syphilis, probably transmitted by Flagler.

That matter is dealt with in the first eighth of the book. The career of Judge Bingham, who eventually became Franklin Roosevelt's ambassador to Britain, is covered in the first third. At that point, Barry Bingham, Sr., the patriarch of the title, becomes and

The Binghams no longer seemed to draw all the good cards

remains the dominant figure. And a rather splendid figure he is, strikingly handsome even in old age, gracious to all, a symbol of virtue and achievement in his field.

The only one of the judge's three children spared the curse of self-destructiveness, he survived Harvard and in 1931 married Mary Caperton, of Radcliffe and Richmond. He was already in the family business, first at the radio station, then in Washington, where he covered Roosevelt's "Hundred Days" and consolidated family relations with the administration, then back in Louisville as associate publisher. There he put together the team — headed by Mark F. Ethridge on the news side and Lisle Baker in business — that lifted the *Courier-Journal* from a dingy, provincial Democratic daily to a newspaper of national importance, distinguished by ambitious news coverage and outspokenly liberal editorializing. He had an interval in England during World War II, when he was a naval press officer and a social star. At the end, he contrived to be the officer in charge of American press relations on the *Missouri* when Japan surrendered. The two decades after the war were the golden era of the *Courier-Journal* and *Times*, when they basked in prosperity born of local monopoly and a growing national reputation, climaxed by a Pulitzer Prize for the *Courier-Journal*

for public service in 1967.

Already, the story had darkened. Ethridge left in 1963, unhappy, making way for the eldest son, Worth Bingham. Tiff and Jones see Ethridge's departure as portentous: "From the moment he arrived in 1936 until this cool autumn day in 1963, everything had gone exquisitely, almost inexplicably right. The papers had become synonymous with courage and quality even as Barry, Sr., Mary, and their five children had glided from one triumph to another." In any case, the Binghams no longer seemed to draw all the good cards. In March 1964, the youngest son, Jonathan, still struggling his way through college, was accidentally electrocuted. In 1966, Worth Bingham, Prince Hal to Barry Bingham's Henry IV, died in a one-in-a-million mishap on Cape Cod.

When Barry Bingham, Sr., stepped out of direct command in 1971, after thirty-five years in charge, his and Mary's remaining son, Barry Bingham, Jr., was given his wish to become editor and publisher. As depicted by Tiff and

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Jones, Barry, Jr., displayed little natural aptitude for the business, but had towering determination, exemplified not only by his triumph over Hodgkin's disease soon after he became publisher, but also by his didacticism, his imposition of ever more inflexible ethical precepts for the newspapers and their employees. By the late 1970s, his two sisters had returned to Louisville, and the senior Barry Bingham had seen to it that they not only had seats on the board of directors, but that they should become seriously involved. Their father is quoted here as saying: "I kept feeling that the family could be brought close together by a common association in the enterprises."

It was a gigantic miscalculation. Resentments carried over from early years made the children oil and water. Barry, Jr., was so tormented by his sisters' presence on the board, and in particular by Sallie Bingham's apparent scorn for him, that he engineered their removal in 1984. Sallie Bingham's response was to decide to sell her interest in the companies, and she made her plans public early in 1985. Her chosen instrument was *The New York Times*, for which Alex Jones was the media reporter, and he persuaded her to read over the phone a confidential evaluation of the closely held properties. Tiffet and Jones remark: "Sallie did not seem to have the foggiest notion of what she was reading." Moral: Do not expect thanks for providing an exclusive.

After a year of churning, the senior Bingham put the newspapers and allied properties on the market; five months later, Gannett became the buyer. Tiffet and Jones say that the clincher came when the newspapers' senior managers told Barry Bingham, Sr., that they would not stay on if Barry, Jr., succeeded him as head of the company. The writers add that Barry, Jr., himself did not find this out until more than three years after the sale of the papers and after his father's death in August 1988; the implication is that Tiffet and Jones told him. His response was to say that if he were ever in business with his children he would be much more candid with them.

Rather surprisingly, Tiffet and Jones have produced a story that is not strikingly different, at its core, from Marie

Brenner's or Sallie Bingham's. They labor dutifully at interviewing people who have worked at the Louisville newspapers and they provide a share of office politics, but it is the nuances of family life and the glimpses of the rich and famous that remain their staple. The view is rarely from the newsroom, sometimes from the executive offices, but most frequently from the manse.

Taken together, three of these four books — exempting Sallie Bingham's on the ground that she at least is entitled to write about her own family — would under other circumstances seem to be a massive invasion of privacy. Not so: the Binghams themselves cooperated and participated determinedly at every stage. There is a telling little anecdote in Brenner's *House of Dreams*: when Barry and Mary Bingham found out in 1987 that Alex Jones's long article in the *Times*, "The Fall of the House of Bingham," was about to win a Pulitzer Prize, they were not chagrined at this further revelation of their trials; instead, they were "thrilled that *their* [my emphasis added] story had won yet another award."

It is a puzzle. Consider the senior Binghams in those days after they announced that the newspapers would be sold: they opened their doors and their most intimate correspondence to those they knew would expose them unsparingly. Were they showing grace under the weight of tragedy or, as Brenner has proposed, was something "terribly wrong with this family, the coldness beneath the warm surface, the clinical attitude toward its own collapse?"

Perhaps the question to ask is whether the family disorder — this failure to protect what many people would consider private — is something that could have happened to any wealthy family. Or is it an affliction of those — those in the arts, in politics, in the media — who suffer a kind of anomie, an ability to believe in themselves only as they exist on the public stage? It is saddening to think of those two elderly Binghams struggling under the delusion that if everything about them were to become known they would be understood, that they would win a favorable verdict from a distant jury that never finished its deliberations. ♦

SHORT TAKES

MY LIFE AS A DOG

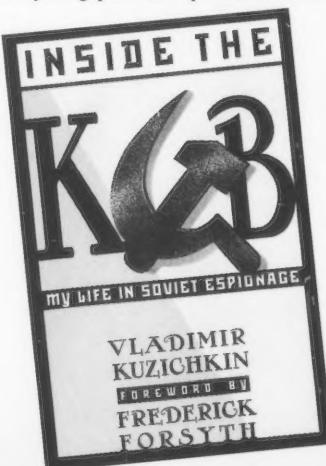
Many reporters, when they go to work in the nation's capital, begin thinking of themselves as participants in the political process instead of as glorified stenographers. Washington journalists are seduced by their proximity to power, and that was me. Power had my lipstick smeared and was toying with my corset hooks before I even got off the Trump Shuttle.

Newsmen believe that news is a tacitly acknowledged fourth branch of the federal system. This is why most news about government sounds as if it were

WITH ENEMIES LIKE THESE

Publicity about the Mogarebi case [the exposure in 1977 of an Iranian brigadier-general as a KGB agent] grew into an international sensation in newspapers and magazines all over the world. In particular, the weekly magazines *Time* and *Newsweek* made great play with the story. At first we took every new item published as yet another blow from the enemy, but we came gradually to assess all that information with a more critical eye. The outcome was that the American special services, who were doubtless behind all the uproar, did an excellent advertising job for the KGB intelligence service.

Everything published proclaimed the



federally mandated — serious, bulky, and blandly worthwhile, like a high-fiber diet set in type.

All of Washington conspires to make reporters feel important — a savvy thing to do to people who majored in journalism because the TV-repair schools advertised on matchbook covers were too hard to get into. The U.S. government, more than any other organization on earth, takes pains to provide journalists with "access" to make the lap-top La Rochefoucaulds feel that they are "present at the making of history." Of course, the same high honor can be had by going around to the back of any animal and "being present at the making of earth."



If you can get accreditation to the congressional press galleries — which, when you're employed by a "major news outlet," is about as difficult as falling asleep in a congressional hearing — you receive a photo ID tag to wear on a chain around your neck.

Everybody who's anybody in Washington wears some kind of ID tag on a chain around his neck, so that the place looks like the City of Lost Dogs. I wore mine everywhere until one day in the shower, when I had shampoo in my eyes, the chain caught on the soap dish and I was nearly strangled by my own identity. This happens a lot to members

of the Washington press corps.

Within days of getting to Washington I began to write pieces featuring all the access I had and frequently mentioning that real political figures, some of them so important you'd actually heard their names, spoke directly to me in person. Thus, readers were left with an indelible sense of "A politician talked to him?" I even got a part-time slot on one of those public affairs TV shows that air at 6:00 A.M. on Sunday mornings. It was a sort of farm-team "McLaughlin Group," but it gave me a chance to say things like "Washington journalists are seduced by their proximity to power."

FROM **PARLIAMENT OF WHORES: A LONE HUMORIST ATTEMPTS TO EXPLAIN THE ENTIRE U.S. GOVERNMENT**

BY P.J. O'ROURKE
THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY PRESS
256 PP. \$19.95

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THE PERENNIALLY PESKY PRESS

Newspaper correspondents with an army, as a rule, are mischievous. They are the world's gossips, pick up and retail the camp scandal, and gradually drift to the headquarters of some general, who finds it easier to make reputation at home than with his own corps or division. They are also tempted to prophesy events and state facts which, to an enemy, reveal a purpose in time to guard against it. Moreover, they are always bound to see facts colored by the partisan or political character of their own patrons, and thus bring army officers into the political controversies of the day, which are always mischievous and wrong. Yet, so greedy are the people at large for war news, that it is doubtful whether any army commander can exclude all reporters, without bringing down on himself a clamor that may imperil his own safety. Time and moderation must bring a just solution to this modern difficulty.

FROM **MEMOIRS OF GENERAL W.T. SHERMAN**
THE LIBRARY OF AMERICA. 1136 PP. \$35

THE INSATIABLE MACHINE

I can tell you what it's like to work for a newspaper. Imagine a combine, one of those huge threshing machines that eat up a row of wheat like nothing, bearing right down on you. You're running in front of it, all day long, day in, day out, just inches in front of the maw, where steel blades are whirring and clacking and waiting for you to get tired or make one slip. The only way to keep the combine off you is to throw it something else to rip apart and digest. What you feed it is stories. Words and photos. Ten inches on this, fifteen inches on that, a vertical shot here and a horizontal there, scraps of news and film that go into the maw where they are processed and dumped out on some page to fill the spaces around the ads. Each story buys you a little time, barely enough to slap together the next story, and the next, and the next. You never get far ahead, you never take a breather, all you do is live on the hustle. Always in a rush, always on deadline, you keep scrambling to feed the combine. That's what it's like. The only way to break free is with a big story, one you can ride for a while and tear off in pieces so big, the combine has to strain to choke them down. That buys you a little time. But sooner or later the combine will come chomping after you again, and you better be ready to feed it all over again.

FROM **ARIZONA KISS**
A NOVEL BY RAY RING. LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY. 224 PP. \$17.95

FROM **INSIDE THE KGB: MY LIFE IN SOVIET ESPIONAGE**
BY VLADIMIR KUZICHIN
PANTHEON. 406 PP. \$25

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To confirm the benefits of nuclear energy, we got an outside opinion.

In the words of the President's National Energy Strategy, "Nuclear power is a proven electricity-generating technology that emits no sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, or greenhouse gases."

In fact, nuclear energy helps *reduce* air-

borne pollutants in the U.S. by over 19,000 tons every day. That's because the 111 nuclear plants now operating in this country don't burn anything to generate electricity.

The air we breathe is cleaner because of nuclear energy. But we need more nuclear

plants. Because the more plants we have, the more energy we'll have for the future of our planet.

For more information, write to the U.S. Council for Energy Awareness, P.O. Box 66080, Dept. BE16, Washington, D.C. 20035.

Nuclear energy means cleaner air.

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The Lower case

Jobless line gets longer

The Times Union (Albany, N.Y.) 4/5/91



Cops looking for sex assault suspect

Brooklyn Paper Publications 4/26/91

Songbirds decline being traced

The Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch 5/19/91

Large hog farmers are more efficient

Sentinel-Tribune (Bowling Green, Ohio) 4/20/91

Give poor information on birth control

Toronto Star 3/22/89

Ugly or not, Osceola's girls will take victory

The Osceola (Fla.) Sentinel 4/19/91



President Bush, after losing
10 pounds, plans to extend
his Memorial Day vacation.

San Antonio Express-News 5/16/91

Award-Winning Exporter Specializes in Flying Cows

The Journal of Commerce 5/6/91

Study: Few problems in family leave

The Philadelphia Inquirer 5/23/91

THREE CANDIDATES for seats on the Auburn Board of Education, running as a team, recently issued a computer-printed press release stating their position on the Owasco Elementary School addition referendum.

Joseph Rossi, Linda Stoprya and Steven Stroman listed their position, but included three misspellings: consensus was spelled "consensus," expenses was spelled "expenses" and priorities was spelled "priorities."

The Post-Standard (Syracuse, N.Y.) 3/28/91

AC/DC fan crushed at concert

Houston Chronicle 1/27/91

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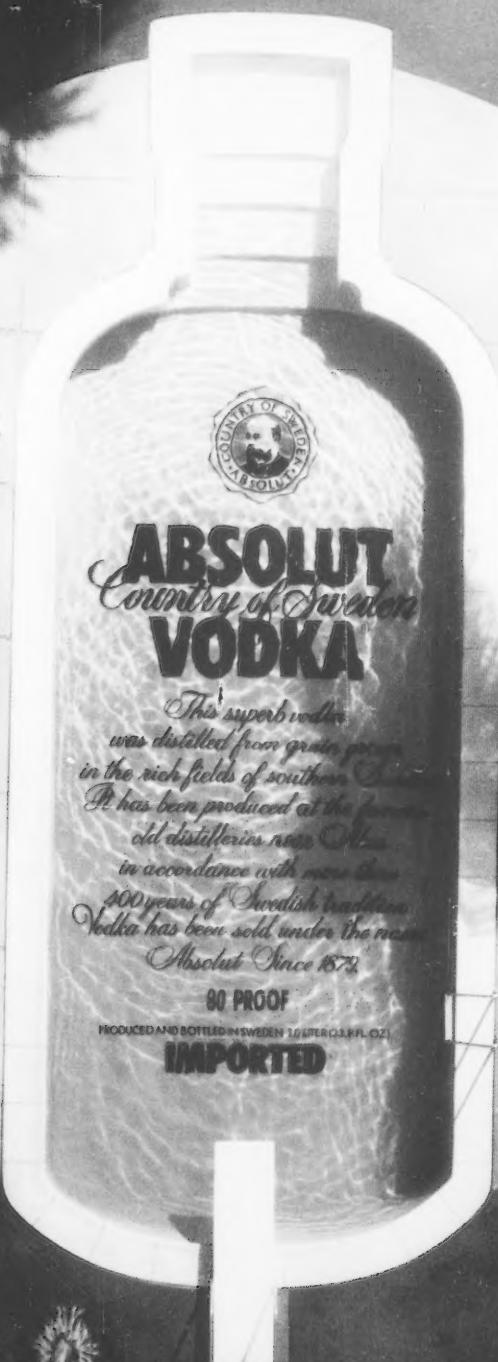
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